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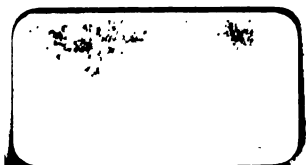


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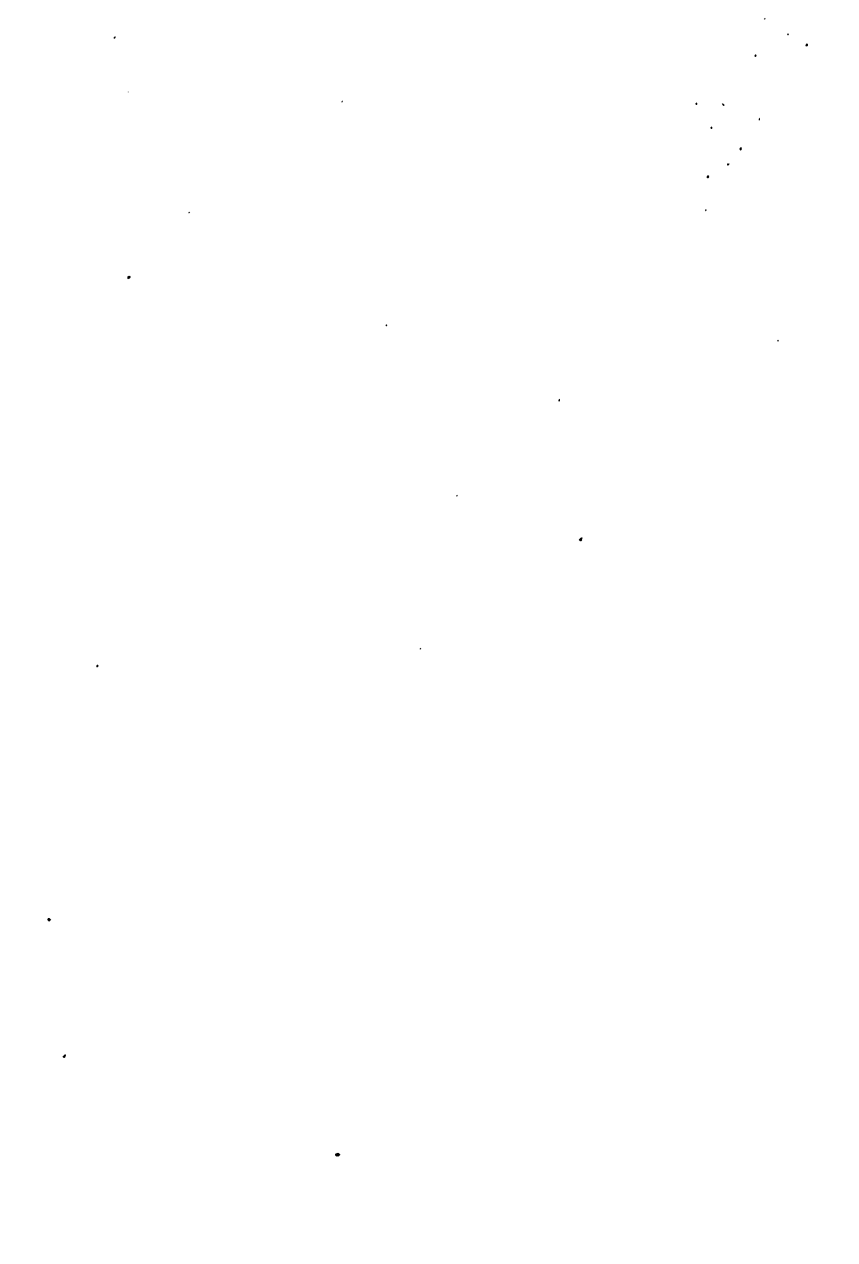
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HOW TO DO IT



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AND HOW TO DO IT.

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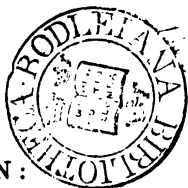
A Tale

*ILLUSTRATING THE HAPPY RESULTS OF .
CONFIRMATION.*

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM GRAY, M.A.

VICAR OF ST JOHN WEMBLEY, HARROW.



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PREFACE.



THE slight story which is interwoven with the lessons on Confirmation has been introduced with the view of connecting them with everyday life. It is founded on fact, though not connected with Chester; and it is so disguised that it cannot be traced, or give pain to any one. The lessons themselves are the result of a lifetime of thought and extended experience. That they may prove useful, and be instrumental in leading some to the Saviour, is the earnest desire and prayer of the Author.

CONTENTS.



CHAP.	PAGE
I. PAINTING	I
II. MUSIC	6
III. DRESS	15
IV. THE SHADOW	21
V. THE COTTAGE	28
VI. THE RECONCILIATION	35
VII. THE REST-DREAM	41
VIII. THE SCHOOL	46
IX. FIRST LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	53
X. THE PROSPECT BRIGHTENS	66
XI. SECOND LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	74
XII. THE VICAR	88
XIII. THIRD LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	98
XIV. FOURTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	112
XV. FIFTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	122

CHAP.	PAGE
XVI. THE MUSICAL PARTY	134
XVII. SIXTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	139
XVIII. THE PAINTING	153
XIX. SEVENTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	162
XX. MR PEMBERTON	175
XXI. EIGHTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	182
XXII. MR DE BURGH	199
XXIII. NINTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	205
XXIV. THE RIDE	217
XXV. TENTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION	224
XXVI. CONCLUSION	237

GOD'S WORK,
AND HOW TO DO IT.



CHAPTER I.

PAINTING.

JANE HOLMES was sitting at her painting. She was using oils, and was intent on her work, which was painting the feet of a figure of her risen Lord and Master, whom she had long learned to love. She had received every advantage which could be given to her, having for that purpose with her parents visited all the chief galleries of Europe. Her natural talent had been fully drawn out, and her taste was delicate and refined. She had been shocked by much that she had seen abroad, and owed the purity of her

taste more to the refinement of true piety than to the study of the best masters. Jane was still at work when her friend Annette Graham entered the little studio. For a moment she stood in surprised admiration of the work of her friend, and then said, "O Jane! I could almost fall down and worship your painting."

"Do not distress me, Annette. If I thought any one could do such a thing, I would burn it at once."

"But I hear you have been offered two hundred pounds for it."

"Two hundred pounds, or two hundred times two hundred, would not tempt me to set up an idol. Do you really think, honestly, that any one could be so foolish as to worship such a picture, which is only intended to convey the idea of mind, purity, and power, combined with a sympathy that continues, and sufferings that have passed, and now glorify Him who has borne them?"

"No, no; I was only in fun. The picture is a powerful one, and does convey just what you describe. When is it to be finished?"

“I cannot tell. I linger over it day by day, and the more I paint, the less am I satisfied. Who can paint truly the Lord of life and glory? At times we seem to get a glimpse of Him in imagination, but pencil and paint refuse to produce what we have seen. No picture that I have as yet looked at has satisfied me, and I can now understand why this is. There is such a wonderful combination in Christ’s character, that you cannot hope to produce it in oils. If you could paint fifty pictures, and give to each one of the traits of that comprehensive nature, and then combine the whole, you might succeed. Unhappily this cannot be done, and the one expression which you produce, although true, so far as it goes, must be untrue to the wonderful original.”

“But,” said Annette, “must not He have looked like any other man? I mean, must He not have had the Jewish features of the day, however they may have changed from time to time? To produce those features in repose is what you want, is it not?—leaving imagination to mould the expressions of love, sorrow, joy, sympathy.

power, spirituality, peace, and triumph which at different times they assumed."

"In some respects no doubt you are right; but remember, that Godlike face must have had in its surpassing beauty, veiled with the deep traces of sorrow for man's sin, a something to tell of the union of God with man. He was the God-man, and who can paint that? Have we ever seen it? has imagination power enough to produce such a combination? When the Godhead showed itself through the veil of the flesh, the awe it inspired was such as men could not resist; and when pity and power were exhibited as emanating from God in Him, did not the lame man leap, the deaf hear, and the diseased feel constrained to put forth new life?"

"But, Jane, you forget that others besides our Lord worked these miracles, by no innate, but only by a derived power, and the cure was not wrought by the look."

"True, but not always with success, nor always with the like result. The touch of the hand also thrilled with life, for there was contact with the God-man. Remember, when the people

saw Him at times, they ran involuntarily to Him and worshipped Him.”

“I suppose you are right ; you generally are. But now, please do not forget that you promised to teach me that new piece which every one so much admires. I quite envy you, Jane. You are musical, you paint, you can read in all sorts of languages ; and yet you are a little mouse, that thinks nothing of itself, but runs away and hides when there is any chance of being seen.”

“Naughty girl ! do not flatter ; you know how much I dislike it ; and I think you know, too, that when one feels, as I do, guilty before God, and often cast down on account of my many failings, I can have no heart to think of myself as anything else than one who falls far short of what she would fain be.”

“Well, I only wish I were more like you. But come, let us go to the piano.”

CHAPTER II.

MUSIC.

MUSIC was as much a passion with Jane Holmes as painting. Her parents, seeing her talent, had secured the best masters for her. There was natural genius in her execution, which showed itself unmistakably, she was now giving up all further instruction. Sacred music was her favourite study, and to the cultivation of it she devoted much of her time. Going to the piano, she first played over the piece which Annette wanted to learn; having gone carefully through it twice, she forgot her presence, and passed on to other and richer melodies, and for some time the flood of music poured forth, entrancing herself and her listener; when suddenly, with a deep blush of shame, she apologised for her forgetfulness and

selfishness, saying, as she rose from the piano, "Pray do forgive me, Annette, dear, such rudeness. You must take my place now, and I will do my best to teach you the piece you want to learn. You will soon master its few difficulties."

Annette did so, quickly catching the full spirit of the music, and left, thanking her kind friend for the trouble she had taken, and securing from her the promise of accompanying her in a drive that same evening.

Shortly after Annette's departure, the Vicar of the parish entered. Jane greeted him warmly, and smilingly said, "I was wishing much to see you, Mr Hardcastle. I am anxious to ask a few questions, if I may venture to do so, about your sermon on Sunday last, it greatly interested me. It was about the necessity of openly devoting ourselves to God's service, and pointed to some scheme of yours which has not yet come before us."

"Yes, Miss Holmes, your perception is keener than that of most. I did not hint this in my sermon, yet by some means you have divined it. Before, however, entering on the subject, I

want, if you please, to consult you about some church music. I am somewhat puzzled. I think the taste of my people is decidedly peculiar. They have scarcely got beyond the barrel-organ style, and that you well know is painful to one with cultivated taste. If I may just run my fingers over the keys of your instrument, I will show you my difficulty."

Accordingly he did so, accompanying with his voice the various chants. Mr Hardcastle was by no means a bad musician, and Jane listened with pleasure as he sang, thinking that if those of the congregation who could (and she believed them to be not a few) would join in like manner, the singing would indeed be delightful.

"Now, what do you advise, Miss Holmes? I will not ask which style is the best, for I know what your answer must be; but I ask, which chants you would be inclined to give to the congregation? Your taste is correct and good; pray do help me."

"I am young to consult on such a matter, but as you have asked my opinion, I should say that

the simpler the music is the better. When the singing is such that poor people cannot join in it, they are apt to regard it as a part of the service with which they have nothing to do, consequently that which ought to affect their minds for good loses all its power, and that which should raise their affections to God, and make them sing His praises with a hearty good will, is lost altogether."

"But do you not think that such music as yours—I beg pardon, I mean such music as the best masters have taught, must elevate the soul, and bring it more into harmony with God?"

"Forgive me if I speak plainly. My own soul is wrapped up in music; I am passionately fond of it, perhaps too much so. Because I understand it and feel all its power, it might do me good; but have you never observed that in a crowd of people where grand music is attempted, it is for the most part a failure. That which draws out the sympathy of the crowd, and enlists their heartiest response, is the simplest and most homely tune. Just in the same way,

I believe, the most complicated music you can use will fail in influencing the mass of your congregation, whilst the simpler your music is the more they will enjoy it, and the more likely it is to do its work. I have heard that Wesley's power was often increased by the simple singing of hymns without any accompaniment whatever."

"Granted, my dear lady; but you surely would not have us go back to such a poor state of things. Roman Catholics are wiser in their generation. See how they use music both at home and abroad."

"Yes, I do know that music draws people to church, and to chapel also; but I do not know that it warms their affections towards their Saviour, or that it does the Master's work. Jesus sang a hymn with His disciples when going to temptation in the garden. I suppose it was His common habit to sing with them without any accompaniment."

"I had not expected you to take this view. Look, for instance, at David and at Solomon, and at the glory of the temple-music when

the Jewish religion was at its height. What say you to that?"

"What can I say, but that the trained choir was expressly trained for the alternate chanting of those noble psalms of David, and Solomon, and Samuel, and Moses, in their fullest and richest notes. Jewish music is very simple, and has come down to us in all simplicity in the accents of the Hebrew psalms. But I hope you do not mind my having spoken so plainly, Mr Hardcastle?"

The Vicar bowed, looked vexed, but replied, in his sweetest tones, that he would think the matter well over, and for the present, at any rate, make little or no change in the music of the old parish choir, who were very tough customers to deal with. "And now," he continued, "having fully discussed the question of music, I am free to answer any questions relative to my sermon. I have been thinking, although I am still young, both in the parish and in the ministry, that it might be advisable for some persons, at all events, to assume a special dress, and devote themselves to a special work—say

teaching children, or attending on the poor or the sick. There might be two or more different dresses, and two or more different orders, established for different purposes in the parish. Do you not agree with me that immense power would be gained by the open dedication of ourselves to God's work?"

Jane was at first grave, and then smiled. Mr Hardcastle looked with some surprise, and hastened to ask for some explanation of the language of her face.

"I see I am again at fault, Miss Holmes. I had expected nothing from you but the greatest sympathy—you who appear to be devoted to the service of God and His holy work. You first look pained and then amused at what I have ventured to say. I think you owe me some slight explanation of what has struck your mind."

"My dear sir, I was pleased with the sermon, and had hoped that you might have been able, in private, to lead me into deeper and truer communion with God—that you might have enabled me to show forth brighter and

more perfect rays of light derived from my Saviour, and to have lived more nearly after His own pattern, by cutting myself off more fully from this evil world and its sins and follies. I was, as you saw, first pained and then amused at the idea you have evolved out of the darkness of the dark ages as a help to the light of the nineteenth century. My own feeling is, that nothing can be more binding on us than our baptismal vows, renewed at Confirmation, and that our openly partaking of the sacred emblems of Christ's death continues to bind us more and more to our blessed Lord, whose we are, and whom we openly serve before the world. A peculiar dress and a peculiar class of duties cramp us of our liberty, and draw on us very unnecessarily the eyes of the world, and minister to our vanity. But what made me smile was a thought that flashed across me, that I should be like Jehoshaphat fighting as a king when Ahab wanted to escape. He had the worst of it, and soon enough cried out."

"Oh no! If that was what you meant I shall

inquire no further; but I thank you for your kind explanation."

Mr Hardcastle was much fascinated with Jane Holmes, and would gladly have asked her to help him altogether in his work, if he could have seen that he made the least impression on her heart; but this he could not flatter himself that he did. Besides, he knew he was comparatively poor, and it was a matter of honour that he should not do anything more than wait patiently, and see how things might favour him. It appeared to him that the distance between them to-day was wider than ever, although, on taking his leave, he acknowledged to himself that his feeling of admiration for the beautiful and accomplished girl had only been deepened by this interview with her.

CHAPTER III.

DRESS.

AS soon as the Vicar had left the house, Jane with a light step betook herself to her mother's boudoir. After kissing her affectionately, she placed herself on a low stool at her feet. Looking up at her, she said laughingly, "Mother dear, have not you finished arranging about those dresses yet? I do wonder you are not wearied of having that tiresome dressmaker so often with you; I know I should be. I wonder why I am so unlike you in this respect? I always thought that daughters were like their mothers, but I am not. Perhaps I do not care enough for dress. You are always so perfectly dressed, I think it ought to serve for us both; don't you?"

"Don't laugh so much at my dress, Janie. I

require all I can put on to make me passable, while you, pretty creature, look well in anything. You know you are only too charming without taking any trouble to make yourself more so. You sing, and you paint, and then how you talk, to be sure! People never care to look at your dress, or have time to wonder what you have on, once you begin. If I were a man, I should fall in love with you at once; but I believe men are all so stupid and selfish now-a-days, they can admire nothing beyond themselves."

Here Jane jumped up and stopped her mother's mouth with a kiss, saying, "It is only mothers that would say and think such things." Then resuming her seat, she remained for a time silent. At length she said hastily, "Mother, dear, how do people dress in heaven?"

"What an odd question, Janie! What could have put such a thing into your head? You don't suppose I am going to die, do you?" and she turned pale at the very idea of such a thing. "You cannot be well yourself, dear child, or you would not be talking of such a terrible

thing as death ; and you know I could not live a single day if you were taken from me. So don't let us talk of it any more."

"But I am in earnest, mother ; indeed I am perfectly well and happy, and I am glad to think you are very well too. Still I do very much want to know what you think of people's dress in heaven."

Mrs Holmes looked puzzled, and was so ; for, truth to say, she had never given the subject a thought. So now, turning the matter rapidly over in her mind, it occurred to her that she had seen heaven variously represented in the different galleries of paintings that she had visited. So she replied, that she had not fully considered the subject, but that some people thought one thing and some another ; sometimes the robes looked all flowing and bright, and at others there were no robes at all, which to her mind did not seem very decent.

"Yes, mother ; and when Adam and Eve were created they did not dress. Do you think it will be so with us when we go to God ?"

“I should think not, for I quite believe we shall have beautiful dresses in heaven, though I cannot say of what texture they may be.”

“I have heard of a tradition the Jews have, mother, that Adam and Eve were beautifully clothed in paradise when they were made, though Moses says they were both naked. They say that the light wove itself round them in folds of great beauty; and God, we read, covers Himself with light as with a garment; and the holy angels are described always as coming from heaven with long flowing robes of white,—I suppose light; and when Christ was transfigured, He seems also to have been clothed with light; His coloured garments shone with white, so that no fuller on earth could equal them in whiteness. Somehow I have always fancied that in heaven we too should be dressed like the angels, and that we should be covered with a bright, beautiful light, flowing out from our spirit bodies.”

Mrs Holmes looked at her daughter, and did not reply. She was sometimes arrested

and amazed at the flashes of thought that came from her, but they left no lasting impression, because she was not a religious woman, but only a woman of the world. Jane rested her head on her mother's knee, and Mrs Holmes let her hand rest lovingly on it, her fingers straying amidst the rich tresses. Presently she bent forward and kissed the ample forehead. As she did so, Jane looked up with a smile, and said, "I am afraid I am still thinking, mother, and I was just wondering when God asks us all about it, some day, whether He will be pleased if we give too much of our time and money to dress. Indeed, it troubles me that we think so differently about this. Daughters, you know, ought to be like their mothers, at least I think so."

"And I think that you are not well, dear, and that you have been tiring yourself over something or other all the morning. So now, to change the subject, just let me know what you have been doing."

Jane did so, and then proposed to finish reading the book which had so much interested

her mother the day before ; after which general conversation followed, in which the heart of mother and daughter were bound together in bonds of deep affection, the daughter still seeking to win the mother by gentle and loving ways to Jesus.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHADOW.

MR HOLMES, who had been from home all the morning, now returned to luncheon, bringing some young friends with him. He was a most hospitable man, somewhat lavish and careless in his expenditure, having been of late unusually successful in several speculations; moreover he wished to see his daughter well and happily married. When lunch was over, and they were again alone, he asked Jane to join him in a long ride he intended taking that afternoon into the country. She told him of her promise to Annette, but he said, if that was the only difficulty in the way, he would himself go round whilst the horses were being saddled, and return with her friend's permission for a change of mind. This settled,

Jane soon appeared daintily equipped for her ride, looking as if neither painting, music, nor reading could in any way interfere with her thorough enjoyment of it; for indeed at any time a ride with her father had for her a peculiar charm. Once started, they soon got into animated conversation, much enjoying the delightful air as they passed the old walls of Chester, and pursuing their way over the bridge leading towards the Duke of Westminster's grounds, they still chatted eagerly, discussing the merits and demerits of the paintings in the Dresden Gallery, which they had visited in the previous year. At length Mr Holmes suddenly said to Jane—

“I hear that Mr Hardcastle means to take you by storm, and carry you off from the old nest some of these days.”

“How can you think or believe such things, papa? I am sure he has no such intention; and if he had” — and then she stopped.

“Just so! If he had, what says my daughter?”

“It does not seem fair to say anything; only

please, papa, do not trouble yourself about such nonsense."

"But, indeed, I do trouble myself about such nonsense, as you call it, Janie, dear; for I tell you honestly that I should like to see you well and happily settled in life, and that soon."

"Thanks, dear papa, but I think I am settled very comfortably; that is to say, if you and mamma are not tired of me yet. If you are"——

"No, child, no. You must know how sadly I should miss you, and your mother would be lonely indeed. I was only thinking of yourself, little one. I cannot live for ever, and I should like to see you with a younger protector."

"You sometimes tell me I am an odd child, father, and I know I do take odd fancies at times; but somehow I do not think I shall ever marry, at least not for a very long time. I have such a beautiful home, and I am so happy in it, that it would require some one very charming, and as handsome and loving as my own father, to tempt me away from it. Besides, you know I do take long fits of dreaming at times, and just now I do not feel as if this happy life

of ours will last very long. Something seems to whisper to me that I shall be wanted at home. I do trust it may not be so, but I must confess that last night I could not get the impression off my mind."

Mr Holmes looked fixedly at his daughter, and remained silent for a little. When he spoke again, he said, "Should you like to know what brought me on this long ride, Janie? You have very clear sight sometimes—it looks almost like second-sight. I will therefore trust you with something which may happen. I am a sanguine man, and have usually acted as if I had no doubt about the success of my schemes, which I must say have always been successful, and I hope may continue to be so, dear child, for your sake. But suppose they do not; suppose, for instance, a speculation of cotton which I have on hand now should fail, and I should lose £200,000 at once, this would leave me comparatively a poor man. Now, in such a case, would it not be better that you were married, that I could settle upon you a comfortable competence, which I could well

afford to do, and then, if a crash came, you could give your father and mother a corner in which to rest?"

"Father, this is the shadow—how strange it looks! Yes, it is coming; I was afraid it would. And yet, what made me imagine such a thing I wonder? No, it would not be right; I could not save you in the way you propose, much and dearly as I love you."

"Not right, Janie! I should only be giving you that which I have a perfect right to give, that which is absolutely mine, that which may save me from an aching heart when I see you without the means of support to which you are accustomed."

"Just think for a moment, my dearest father, The matter you now admit is trembling in the balance. Six months hence what is now yours may be another's. You have fairly staked it on chance of a rise or fall in prices, and you would withdraw it for me because you are afraid of its being lost. You would deprive another of that which ought fairly to have belonged to him, if it had not been with-

drawn to save us. No ; I dare not accept of money under such circumstances. I should feel obliged to give it up altogether, and then I should be defrauding the man who might have married me supposing me to be rich."

"Janie, child, you do not understand. The matter is done every day by the most honourable men and women ; and instead of losing £200,000, I may gain as much, and then I shall have increased my present fortune. What then ?"

"Well, then, let us wait with patience and see the result. I am not, as you well know, guided by the world, but by a higher Master, even the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven ; and I am quite sure He would not like me to do this thing. And, to return to the old point," she continued, with a happy smile, "even supposing there was any one at this moment ready to marry me, I am not ready to go."

That same evening, Jane drew her chair close to her father's side, and slipping her hand into his, said softly, "Kiss me, papa. You are not vexed at what I said to-day, are you ?"

Mr Holmes gladly gave the kiss, but at the same time said, "I cannot be angry at anything you say, my child; but I am in serious earnest, and I wish you to think of what I said, for I have my fears. I cannot help them, and that long face of yours seems prophetic."

"Well, let it be prophetic of happiness then, papa. We can do without much that we now have, I am sure. After all, it does not require much for real happiness; luxury is another thing. But do not be afraid for me or for yourself. You are a brave, honourable man; and should the worst even come, you will be a happy man, for truly God is good—God is love."

The long day came to an end at last, and Jane retired to dream of a cottage shared with her father and mother.

CHAPTER V.

THE COTTAGE.

SIX months have passed, and the scene is wholly changed. Jane's dream has become a reality. The once rich man is no longer, and the lordly house has been exchanged for a small cottage on the outskirts of Chester. But in the cottage there is Jane's piano, and all that can make her happy in her old and loved pursuits.

Mr Holmes had mentioned casually to a friend the offer he had made to his daughter, and the way in which she had received it; this friend had again spoken of it, as he thought it was one of the noblest things he had ever heard of, and in this way it had reached the ears of those into whose hands the bulk of Mr Holmes' property had passed. And well for him was it

that the story was told ; for all his fortune was swept away, not only £200,000, but far more than the present value of all he had. He gave up unreservedly what he possessed. Sufficient, however, was set apart of his furniture, and bought-in by his friends, to furnish a neat and pretty cottage ; and so much sympathy was felt for Jane, that anything which could minister to her comfort or pleasure was carefully secured for her. Such conduct as her's was indeed noble, but that it was allowed to be so was a credit and honour to those Liverpool merchants, who are renowned for their generosity and princely liberality, and their instant appreciation of what is good and noble. The story of the gifted Jane Holmes soon spread, and in less than three months after her loss of fortune she had refused more than one offer of marriage, in accepting which she might have secured to herself both wealth and position. But she felt truly that her place now was at home. With the simplicity of character which distinguished her, and with her rule of life, viz., the strict imitation of Christ in His unselfish

life, she found that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. Her influence, together with the high character borne by Mr Holmes, secured him an immediate appointment, of about £200 per annum, in Chester; and with this sum, small as it was, he would gladly have contented himself, had his daughter thought fit to marry. That which, however, deterred her from doing so must be explained at more length.

Mrs Holmes, when the shock came upon her, and it could no longer be hidden from her eyes, stormed and behaved more like one bereft of reason than anything else. Nothing could persuade her but that her husband had been reckless and wicked in the extreme thus to deprive her of all her comforts, and to destroy her position amongst her many friends. Her affections were alienated from him; she would rarely see him, and could never now speak either a kind word to or of him. Worse still, although she had been distinctly told the amount of her income, she could not be induced to moderate her own expenditure in the least, continuing to purchase bonnets,

dresses, and shawls as she would have done in the days of her greatest prosperity, without a thought, or even a care, as to how the long bills were to be met. In fact, whatever she conceived a fancy for among all the many etceteras of a lady's wardrobe, she ordered without scruple; nothing that could be said to her in argument of necessary and strict economy had the least effect upon her, and she continued her reckless course in spite of all remonstrance. So it may easily be conceived how trying was the position of a daughter who tenderly loved both her parents, and who was most anxious for the spiritual as well as the temporal well-being of each.

One day, as the sun was setting, towards the end of the winter, Mr Holmes came to her and said, "Janie, dear, what must we do? You know that for your sake I would do anything, and for your sake I do endure much that tries me in your poor mother's conduct and behaviour; but it strikes me that my tenderness is misplaced somehow. You are so evidently failing, dear child, as no longer to look like my bright

Janie of old ; it quite distresses me. But I think I will assert my right of being master in my own house, and put an end to all this lavish and wasteful expenditure out of our small pittance. What do you advise, Janie, dear ? Tell me ; you are always wise and just. Do advise me, for I feel like one going mad."

"Well, first of all, I would advise patience, my dear father. Hitherto, you know, we have been able to meet all my mother's debts, for some of my paintings have sold well, and the school, small as it is, brings me in a fair share of profit ; so I can neither complain nor despair. You may be quite sure that at some not very distant time my mother's eyes will be opened, and she will, once her affections are touched, reward you amply for your long forbearance with her."

"Yes, yes, dear ; that may well be. But meanwhile you are the sacrifice ; your health, your comfort, and your happiness are all given up for the sake of your parents."

"And for whom should youth and health be sacrificed, if not for those who have given me

all I have? But indeed it is not so,—I am quite well and strong. God lays not on us burdens heavier than we are able to bear. He knows our strength, and is tender and compassionate. Do not trouble yourself, and fret, papa; the sun will shine out from behind the dark cloud before long. Meanwhile, I know you will join me in redoubling our prayers for God's help, for without Him we can do nothing."

"I do and can pray for you, dear child, with my whole heart; but towards your mother I must confess I do feel differently. I cannot bring myself to pray for her as I used to do; she has been so very strange of late, showing herself to be so utterly selfish and hard-hearted. Still, perhaps you will say, this is all the more reason why we should pray, and I believe it is. Your mother may feel herself wronged, in the view she takes of the matter, thinking, perhaps, that I had no right to risk her money as well as my own—our all in fact; and she may have some justice on her side. Still I acted for the best, believe me; and I did not foresee the issue of this last speculation; I was grossly deceived. So

I suppose I ought to try and be more patiently gentle with a weak woman who jumps at conclusions without weighing both sides of the question ; there is certainly something in this way of looking at the matter. But why will not your mother allow me to reason it over with her ? She will not even see me, much less hear my defence."

" Never mind, dear father ; the impetuosity of my mother's character is all the better for you. Believe me, when her eyes are opened to see her fault, and she feels that she has wronged you, nothing that she can then do will satisfy her, and her love will return in tenfold strength. Only have patience, pray, and wait ; I feel sure all will yet be well."

" Well, dear child, I do promise that I will seek in prayer for God's help. He only knows how hard it has all been and still is to bear ; and if you had now been, as I so much desired you should, in your own happy home, this would indeed have been a very miserable one." So saying, he kissed her, adding, " May God's richest blessing rest upon you and be your reward ! "

CHAPTER VI.

THE RECONCILIATION.

SIX months have passed since the cottage was occupied, and Mrs Holmes' various bills amounted to upwards of £400. She sat in her room, which was littered with dresses and other expensive articles, but at this moment she was intent on the examination of an account of £100 which she had that morning received. Jane entered unperceived, looking much fatigued and exhausted after her morning's work in the schoolroom. She at once took her old place at her mother's feet, and laid her head on her knee.

"Janie, darling," began Mrs Holmes, "you look fagged out; what have you been doing to give yourself such unusually pale cheeks? When do you mean to get married, child? It would give me great pleasure to get your trousseau. I

have so little to occupy my time, now that we have so few visitors, that it would be a real charity to employ me."

But Jane's only answer was tears, soft quiet tears, that followed each other slowly down her pale, sad face.

"What ails you, Janie? Has anything happened to vex you? Why do you weep? Let me share your sorrow. If I can help you, I will."

"You wish me to marry, mother, and you have often pressed me to do so; but I should not like to marry unless I were deeply loved in return, and how could I be sure of that?"

"My dear child, no one in their senses could help loving you; don't fear about that."

"But I do fear very much. How did you feel when you married papa? Did you think he would love you in return?"

"I never doubted it for a moment. He was a fine, clever, handsome man in those days. Of course we loved each other, or we should not have married."

"And now, mother?"

"O Janie! what have I been doing, keeping

you from your home, your love, and making you look pale and worn and sad? God forgive me! I am well punished. Can you forgive your mother, child—your foolish, vain, wicked, selfish mother?”

Jane rose from her seat, and folding her arms round her mother, kissed her tenderly, and soothed her by thanking her again and again for all her love to her. She then whispered, “And so, for my sake, you will love dear papa again tenderly, just to show me how to love? I cannot be better than my own mother.”

“Yes, I will, and you must tell him, and ask him to forgive me. May God forgive me too, for I have been very wicked and foolish.”

“He will forgive you, mother, but only for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins. But before going to seek papa, let us together ask for pardon, and then let us examine these accounts carefully.”

Had an arrow pierced the mother’s heart she could not have felt more pain. She saw it all now, and the cruel wrong she had done, not only to her husband, but to her child, her

dearest treasure. Her first motion was to crumple up the paper in her hand, and fling it from her. Jane quietly picked it up again, and opening it, said, "A hundred pounds ! yes, it is large, but it must be my care to see this paid."

The distress of the strong woman, whose eyes were now opened, was something sad to witness. Her daughter's pale cheeks and wearied look had told their tale of suffering for her who for long had acted so unworthy a mother's part. She lost all control over herself. On her knees before her daughter she implored her pardon, entreating her to give her work to do, that she might in some measure save the burden from falling so heavily on her.

Jane was shocked beyond expression. She raised her mother up, and by comforting and cheering words quieted her. Then she counted up all the bills that were due, at least so far as her mother knew of them ; and assured her that many of them could be settled at once without inconvenience, and the remaining ones cleared off before long, as she had some good orders for paintings, which would shortly be completed

and sent home. "And so now, mother dear, seeing you have made my heart very glad, let me arrange your pretty room for you, and leave you as queen in it, while I go and seek papa."

Having carefully put away every vestige of extravagance, Jane quickly arranged the room to suit her own taste, and so altered its whole appearance as greatly to surprise Mrs Holmes. When all was done, she once more asked her mother to join in thanking God for such mercy. Being full of thankfulness, she did so; and, hand joined in hand, they knelt together, whilst Jane poured out her thanks to God, praying that He would so knit the hearts of those she so loved to each other and to Himself, that in the eternal world father, mother, and daughter might be united before His glorious throne, all their sins pardoned in His blood, and all their evil thoughts changed and renewed by the indwelling Spirit of grace and holiness.

On rising from their knees, there was a sweet calm over Mrs Holmes' face, showing that a change of a remarkable kind was taking place in her heart. Kissing her mother, she hastened

off to seek her father and tell him all that had happened. He would scarcely credit her, and looked at his daughter as if he thought she must be dreaming, or at least labouring under a delusion, and fearing that her mind had given way under the pressure she had lately had upon it. However, after a lengthy conversation, he became fully convinced that all was as she said, and father and daughter together sought the wife and mother. Jane only remained long enough to see her parents in each other's embrace, forgiving and forgiven ; then turning, she closed the door, and going gently to her own room, poured out her heart to her Father in heaven, who had seen her tears, heard her prayers, and blessed her efforts, and crowned them with success. Great exhaustion followed, she felt she needed rest ; but could she take it ? This was a question she could not quite answer, and it was one she alone must answer, for she could not bring the trial of her life before any one.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REST-DREAM.

AFTER a happy evening spent in the warm room where the fire was allowed to throw out its fitful light, the three parted ; father and mother to speak of the interests of their darling child, to whom they both felt they owed so much, and to pray that health and strength might be given to her; and for this they prayed as they had never prayed before, feeling that they loved her as their very life. Jane sought her couch in great doubt as to what her real duty was. She had poured out her heart in gratitude to God, and then asked Him, in a simple childlike way, to give her some clue by which she might know what she ought to do. This she had asked for the sake of Him who knew all our infirmities and carried our sorrows,

and who she knew had promised to hear and answer all the petitions of His children. At length she fell quite unexpectedly into a calm gentle sleep, which lasted till nearly morning light; then she became restless, but soon again fell into a state of dreaminess, in which she seemed to be wandering with one to whom she turned from time to time with great affection. She could not see his face, as each time she tried to do so he turned away. They wandered over a beautiful garden, and through greenhouses in which bloomed every flower she liked. He asked her their names, and she gave them, without forgetting a single plant. He asked whether she liked the garden, or whether she could suggest a better plan? She rapidly sketched one of much beauty,—one she had never seen, she said, but only imagined. She felt that he was pleased, but again she failed to see his face. His voice was very pleasant, low, and sweet; it made delightful music in her heart, and she felt happy. And now she entered the house, which was a fine one, and at his bidding arranged its furniture, and decorated the large

room with flowers, and he approved. Servants attended and did his bidding as they dined. Her lips tasted the richness of the wine, and her body felt refreshed and strong ; but still his face was hidden. Then they left the house together, and drove rapidly along the road, which she could see was lined with fine old trees. They entered a churchyard, and her blood ran cold ; she almost fainted, but he held her fast. They passed into the village church ; there stood a clergyman robed and with his book in his hand open. She felt happy, and yet she drew back ; the strong hand held her, the strong arms drew her closer to him ; there was a kiss on her lips, but she had fainted, and could not again see her companion. When she became conscious, her father and mother were beside her, blessing her, and pointing to her companion, of whose features she thought she had caught one glance—when she awoke. She trembled violently, but again she fell asleep. Once more her companion was beside her, but now she was painting diligently, and the brush fell from her hands and spoilt her work. She tried again, and again the brush

fell, and made matters worse. She sighed and gave up the attempt, and sat down in tears. Her companion has taken up the brush, he has mixed the paints; she cannot see him though she so longs to do so. He is going to touch her painting, her spoilt painting, the one that was to pay off her mother's debts. She must not allow him. No, no. She tries to rise, but cannot, she is quite helpless—and so she watches. But what is this? As touch after touch is added, wonderful to say, the picture lives; it is ten times better than it was before, and the daubs which seemed to spoil it beautify it most. What taste! what talent! But the painting has fallen flat, and in the effort to raise it she awoke. She lay thinking. She wanted something to guide her—something to indicate her course. Was this wild dream to be depended on? did it picture in any way the longings of her heart or the leading of Providence? would the future to her ever be what seemed to be pictured here? Long past her usual hour for rising she lay thinking and pondering it all over, and there awoke at last in her heart the conviction that perhaps it

would not be necessary that she should labour very long for the support of her dear parents, and that if God opened the way for it, she might be justified in accepting a home for herself. She was, however, still in doubt as to whether she should rest or not. If she did not, she might run the risk of spoiling her picture, and this would be a dire calamity. She would, she thought, wait and see whether other indications would reach her. The holidays were drawing on—her pupils would soon be leaving her. Perhaps—nay, not perhaps—certainly God would hear her prayer, and give her some real clue to her duty. Meanwhile she felt better and more rested; fresh hope and spirit seemed to be infused into her life, and she met her parents at the morning meal with a glad heart, rejoicing in their happiness and reunion. They too saw a change for the better in her; the eye was brighter, the words came more freely and with more spirit, and altogether she looked less worn and sad.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SCHOOL.

FRRIENDS had been very kind in securing pupils for Jane, and those she had, paid her high terms. Her fame as an artist and musician, as a linguist, and one learned in many ways, together with the high religious character she bore, made this an easy matter. She only received eight pupils for finishing, and these, with what she made by her paintings, produced a very fair income. The labour had proved almost more than she had strength for, joined as it was with anxiety on her parents' account ; and with the application of every moment to her work. She allowed of no time for out-of-door exercise or relaxation of any kind: had it not been for her Sundays, she would long since have broken down.

As we shall have a good deal to say about her pupils and her intercourse with them, it may be as well to describe them more particularly. They are all now assembled in the cheerful room used by them as a schoolroom—Harriet Müller, Amy Adams, Edith James, Annie Wright, Matilda Hopkins, Euphemia Partridge, Nora Ireland, and Jessie Macpherson. Let us take a look at each, and say what the outside promises.

Harriet Müller was very dark, without the slightest colour ; her hair was jet black, and she had eyes that almost rivalled it in blackness. Her features were decidedly clever rather than handsome ; the broad forehead, sufficiently high and developed, told of a well-exercised mind ; the nose celestial spoke of sarcasm ; the lips were rather thick, but not painfully so ; and the head was well set on a well-grown body. Harriet was a striking girl, and looked with great love and respect at her teacher.

Amy Adams was a complete contrast to Harriet Müller. She was a frail, delicate, and refined-looking girl, without much that was striking in her appearance ; rather pretty ; but

there seemed an absence of character in what she did, although there was amiability and goodness written on all her features.

Edith James, with long hair which hung in beautiful curls round her face, was the beauty of the room; her blue eyes changed their expression every moment; and lips, nose, and chin—indeed her whole face—aided in giving expression to her quick and lively thoughts. She was a very sunbeam embodied in flesh.

Annie Wright was as dark as Edith was fair, and as retiring as Edith was lively. She was perhaps equally clever, but there was a haughty curve of the lip which betokened pride. Her whole bearing stamped pride unmistakably upon her—pride mingled with obstinacy.

Matilda Hopkins was the daughter of wealthy parents; but ornaments of all kinds, and the richest dress, failed to relieve her face and person from the stamp of selfishness. Indeed, her features told of luxurious living, but of little thought.

Euphemia Partridge was very much her opposite. Her clothes were very poor, but they

could not hide the delicacy of her taste, nor the spirituality of her mind. The eye was thoughtful and clear, beaming with soft light ; the lips were wreathed with sweet smiles ; and the whole appearance of this girl, beloved by all who knew her, was attractive in no ordinary degree.

Nora Ireland now comes forward to sit for her portrait, and tosses up her head in her usual way, as much as to say, "Well, what do you think of me, I should like to know ?" She is a warm-hearted, impulsive, giddy, and affectionate girl, clever too, but her wild hair and disorderly dress proclaim an ill-regulated mind, although it is full of much that is good and pure, and that may be moulded into something very loveable by and by.

Jessie Macpherson comes last, with a steady, slow walk, rather awkward from shyness. She has high cheek-bones and clear complexion, and an open truthful eye ; her hair has caught the rays of the rising sun, and left her in return a skin of exquisite whiteness ; the figure is long and lank, and the head stoops slightly. The feeling she inspires is the desire to throw an

arm round her, and give her the support and confidence she needs; and yet, when you look more closely, there is no lack of sufficient firmness, if not of obstinacy, in the long, square chin and firm mouth.

Such were the eight girls who had entered the schoolroom of the cottage, and were the pupils for whom Jane had laboured for six months past, all of whom she was now preparing for the Confirmation which was rapidly drawing on, at the request of their parents, and still more at the request of Mr Hardcastle, who was a frequent visitor at the cottage, and whose faith in Miss Holmes was by no means shaken by the loss of her father's wealth. Jane was striving to train these young minds for that rite which our Church wisely deems needful before admitting her children to partake of the Supper of our Blessed Lord. This slight sketch of the different pupils will enable their answers and remarks to be better understood by my young readers.

Rousing herself into full activity of mind, Jane kneels with her pupils, and offers up for

each the prayer she needs most ; opening her Bible, she reads the usual portion, and slightly comments on it, and then says, " And now, dear girls, before commencing our usual occupation for the day, I must tell you that I have been requested by our Vicar, and by most of your parents, to do what I can to aid you in your preparation for the Confirmation which is to be held this year in our parish, and which is now fast drawing on. I think I can enter into all your feelings, your hopes and your fears, as I remember so well my own doubts at the season of my preparation for the same rite ; and I shall be truly pleased if, after our lesson is over, you will come to me, one by one each day, alone, and tell me what there may be in your mind of difficulty or of hope, so that I may be, if possible, still more helpful to you. A feeling of shyness may keep you back from speaking before each other, and you may not like to put questions which you are yet longing to ask ; so that I will give you this opportunity. Our time being so short, I do not think, either, that it would be well to allow questions in the class ;

but I will explain as far as I can each day, and if you will all take careful notes, then, as opportunity offers, you must not hesitate to seek for more information. It will be your turn to-day, Harriet ; you are thoughtful, and will, I hope, be able on this first occasion to ask questions on a subject which must be familiar to you already.

CHAPTER IX.

FIRST LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

“**Y**OU remember, dear girls, that when, in the primitive Church, the disciples went everywhere, and preached that one Jesus, the long-promised Messiah, had appeared on the earth as a Jew of the kingly family of David, and had been crucified for the sins of all men, and then had broken through the gates of death, and once more become a living man; that He had appeared to many who had known Him before His death, and now was ascended into heaven to plead for His beloved Church, some believed, and some did not believe. Those who believed were baptized in His name, and became His followers, and observed His laws; but baptism was not sufficient for them, and so, after a time, the apostles, some of the twelve great disciples, whom Jesus loved

so much, and who had followed Him so closely during His life—some of these, one or two, visited from time to time the young baptized disciples, and confirmed them in the faith they had professed ; and in order to make them more able to carry the good news of His death and life to others, they laid their hands on them, and gave them the gifts of the Holy Ghost. It was not always the inward life of the Holy Spirit which was conferred, because some of these disciples terribly disappointed their teachers and spiritual fathers, and fell away into error and sin ; but always the outward gifts of the Holy Ghost were bestowed. In one case, the disciple was able to speak one or two languages which he had never learned, and was thus able to tell to those of other countries of the power of the risen Saviour. In another case, the disciple was given the power of healing diseases, so that he could go from house to house and from town to town, carrying with him this strange power, that, by a simple touch or word, when he named the name of Christ, all diseases yielded and fled away as

if affrighted. Another disciple was given the power of working miracles; he could take up the poisonous snake and feel no hurt; he could tread on the head of the most deadly insect, and crush it without any risk; he could drink the most deadly poison, and yet not be the worse; he could multiply bread, and change water into wine or oil, when he felt within himself the indicating power of God,—for unless he felt that, he could do nothing. The power of working miracles was guarded and confirmed by the Spirit Himself. If the faith were there, the disciple could lift a mountain into the sea; but if the faith were not there, he could not move the smallest stone. I have no doubt, however, that marvellous miracles were wrought to prove the truth of Christianity, though the records of those things have perished for the most part. Another disciple had the power of interpreting various languages, which were sometimes spoken in the churches by persons who themselves did not understand what they were saying, and thus gave a double proof of the Spirit's power, who made one man speak what

he could not understand, and another interpret what he could not have spoken. Another disciple was given the strange power of prophesying from time to time, and telling events which, sooner or later, would take place—as in the case of Agabus. Another had the power of preaching—which is often called prophesying—preaching with great power, and with such conviction, that numbers of persons believed the message he gave them from God. This wonderful confirmation of the primitive Church we do not now possess, for we have no apostles who have the power of confirming in this way ; but we have clergymen less than the apostles in the form of the governors of Christ's Church, our bishops, and they, in humble imitation of those great men, lay their hands on the heads of all those who are anxious to make a bold and open profession of Christianity, and to come forward as communicants in our Church ; and they pray earnestly, together with all the clergy present, and with all the assembled congregation, that each confirmed person may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost ; that is, not the

outward gift, which they do not believe they have the power to bestow, but the inward gift, which they believe will be given to those who ask in deep and earnest faith and prayer. It is a solemn service, which we ought to approach with chastened and hallowed minds. To make an open profession before the whole world that you are Christ's disciples, and wish to be united to Him in the closest bonds of union, is a bold step, and can only be a safe step when due preparation is made for it. The giddy and thoughtless, the light-minded and the profane, often bring double ruin on their heads by attempting to do what is supposed to be only the proper thing for young persons before they enter into the ordinary duties of responsible life; but I do trust, and earnestly pray, that none of you will dare—yes, I use a strong word; you may look and feel astonished, for to my knowledge I have never used the word to any of you before; but now I do use it, and repeat, that I trust none of you will dare to appear before God and the world as His true disciples without much and deep preparation of heart.

And yet, do not misunderstand me. I hope none of you will refuse to come, or dare—again I use this strong word—dare to draw back and refuse to profess your love for that dear Saviour who has shed His heart's blood for you,—your love for the Eternal God of love, who has given His Son in order that 'whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life,'—your love for the Spirit of grace and holiness, who hears you, and gently and lovingly fits you for the eternal home of song and praise and gladness and beauty, the home of union and love, the home of purity and peace for evermore, the home of the saints and the angels, where with flashing wings of light they meekly wait until the word is given which speeds them on messages of love to less happy beings. Now, dear girls, I must stop for to-day, I do not feel very strong ;" and Jane did indeed look much and painfully exhausted.

Nora unperceived left the room, and returned with Mrs Holmes, who carried a glass of wine and a biscuit.

After a short intermission, lessons were com-

menced, and the day closed without anything of moment having occurred.

Harriet Müller was to have remained for her promised conversation on the subject of the morning's lesson, but she was destined to be put off for a little, as Edith came and put her arms round her kind teacher, begging for a kiss of forgiveness, saying she had coaxed her mother to come with the carriage and give her a drive, which she was sure would do her a great deal more good than talking any more at present.

Accordingly it was arranged that Harriet should return in about two hours, when Jane hoped to be much rested by the pleasant drive. The carriage was waiting, and as soon as she was comfortably seated in it, the horses started off at full speed.

When the town was quite left behind, much to the surprise of Jane, a basket was produced with fruit, and everything that could tempt a delicate appetite, she was not asked to eat alone, for Edith soon set the example with hearty good-will, and at the same time brightened up every one with flashes of her lively

thought. Jane felt exceedingly refreshed on her return home, and read in this an answer granted to her prayer. Without her seeking, a degree of rest had been given for the day; but now she must hasten to Harriet and have her promised talk with her.

Harriet was very glad to see how much better Miss Holmes looked. "The air has improved your looks greatly," she said, adding, "Edith is always good-natured in thinking of others."

"Yes, she is indeed. But shall we to our subject, dear, having lost so much time already? Have you understood our lesson of this morning, do you think, fully?"

"Yes, I think so; there was nothing so very difficult in it. Something there was hard to believe, but not to understand. I cannot see with your eyes—I wish I could. It all seems very nice, but I can't believe in miracles; it seems to me all folly and delusion."

"O Harriet! I was afraid it would be so in your case. I know well the tendency of your mind. You have read, and so imbibed much of the German spirit. But let us see what is

your great difficulty? Is it the possibility of a miracle—is that so?”

“Yes, that is it. God made laws, then why should He break them? God has made fixed laws, then how can He violate them? Miracles are the setting aside of nature’s laws.”

“No, no, Harriet; that is just your mistake. A miracle is not a setting aside of any laws of nature or of God. This is an old and exploded notion. It is the exercise of a higher law than we have yet discovered, and so we give it the name of miracle—that is, of something wonderful to us, but perfectly simple to God.”

“Well, now, I wish I could believe that; it is certainly putting the matter in a wholly new light. But how can that apply, for instance, to the cure of a lame man?”

“Simply in this way, dear. Health is the natural law of life; it is some obstruction which causes lameness or any other disease: remove it and the disease is cured, or, in other words, the old and natural law regains its wonted power. There is nothing here against God’s laws.”

“Thank you for the light you are throwing on the subject, dear Miss Holmes ; but how will that apply to giving life to the dead ? Here all the natural laws are traversed, I think.”

“No, pardon me ; life is the law of nature ; death is a law imposed on account of sin, and acts against the original law : remove the imposed law, and life flows on in its natural channel again. We cannot tell what death is ; we say the separation of the soul from the body, or the ceasing to breathe, or the ceasing of the blood to circulate from and to the heart. All that is needed clearly in restoring life is the continuation of the ordinary primary law of our being. Here is nothing against God’s laws, but all working according to the laws He originally enforced.”

“Well, but, my dear teacher, suppose I grant you that miracles may be possible, and, if they are not against nature, they must be possible ; will you please tell me why the Bible should be so stuffing full of them ? No other book is, except, indeed, books that we do not believe to be true.”

“The answer is very simple, dear girl. Miracles are God’s testimony to the truth of that on which our salvation depends. Would you or could you have any respect for a book professing to come from God which had no credentials? Miracles ceased the very instant they were not required. We have none now, and have not had for eighteen hundred years. The Bible once proved to have come from God, miracles were altogether unnecessary. The Being who made all laws shows that He knows how to use those that man has not yet grasped, thus proves Himself worthy of respect and belief, and then speaks.”

“But does it not seem a weak ground on which to rest the awful weight of eternal truth to build truth on wonders? Is it worthy of God?”

“God has not indeed done anything like this; He is too wise, His Word speaks to the heart, and tells its own tale; that searching Holy Word of truth and love and power speaks equally to every people, of every age, and every nation; it is the Book of the world, and its prophecies, always fulfilling, and never wholly fulfilled, speak

of the great Being who lives in eternity, and who is the end as well as the beginning, because He made and arranged all that is and shall be. Miracles were needful for the age in which they were wrought to direct attention, and may again be needful—who can tell?—when rationalism and infidelity deny the power of God, and His control over His own laws. The Bible does not rest wholly or in great part on miracles, it rests on great facts, and on great truths, and on prophecies covering thousands of years, the fulfilment of which in our own days will probably revolutionise our world, and bring thousands to the feet of Christ. The rock on which God's eternal truth stands in the Bible is as unmovable as God Himself. Can I answer any other question or objection, dear Harriet?"

"I am sure you are very clever, and very, very good, dear Miss Holmes. Do tell me, can I have the Holy Ghost given to me too?"

"To you too? yes, to you too. I am thankful you have asked in that way. Yes, dear, you can. Shall we ask that it may be given to you?"

Teacher and pupil knelt together, and the prayer of faith and love ascended, which melted the heart of Harriet Müller, and sent her home with the feeling that she might yet perhaps resemble one whom she deeply loved for her goodness, as well as revered and admired for her beauty, her talents, her gentleness, and above all, her love.

CHAPTER X.

THE PROSPECT BRIGHTENS.

ON joining her father and mother in the evening, Jane thought she noticed more than the usual amount of cheerfulness and contentment in their faces; their kisses were, too, if possible, warmer than ever; there was a sheltering care in her father's embrace, and happy bright look in her mother's glance, which she could not quite understand. Had anything happened of which she had not heard? were their hopes brighter than before? or was all this the mere effect of their reunion and love, and of the misery now uplifted from their hearts, as she hoped, for ever? She had just come from looking at a painting that she was particularly anxious to finish, but the light was too far gone to permit of her touching it that evening; and

she was feeling that she might perhaps be acting a selfish part in accepting, as she had already done, the kind offer of friends to drive her out for enjoyment when time was so very precious and so needful in every way. She had promised herself that no dreams should prevent her from being at work as early as the light would serve for her purpose in the morning; it was therefore doubly pleasant to her to be met in this spirit, and she sat down intending and hoping to enjoy her evening most thoroughly. She did so in a way she little expected.

“I was just saying that it was time for you to join us, Janie, dear,” said her father. “Do you remember the ride we took once, and the memorable conversation, when I visited the manager of the Provincial Bank?—though, by the way, I am not sure that I did mention who and what Mr Hopkins was. Well, you know now. I went to tell him of my position, and to ask his advice. He gave it, and I followed it, and since then he has been my friend in every way. By common consent my creditors left all my secu-

rities in his hands, not pressing for an immediate settlement. They felt satisfied that it would be better for all parties to do so. He told me that as I had been perfectly open, and as the Bank was my largest creditor, and the other creditors had full confidence in him, he would watch the changes of the market, and by and by sell to the best advantage. This he has now done, with the most happy results. He was here this evening, and has handed me a passbook with £500 to my credit. This will be increased by and by, but it is not yet certain by how much—probably £1000 or £2000. I don't know when I felt so happy. I am once more like a man not crushed down, but able to hold up my head, for I can now be of some little use to my family, and need no longer allow you to work yourself to death in your noble efforts to sustain the honesty of the family."

Jane could not reply except by a kiss. Presently, looking up with a very happy face, she said, "And so, my dear father, you would like to rob your daughter of her greatest pleasure—for pleasure it is—to minister to her parents' wants."

“The parents should lay up for the children, and not the children for the parents,” he whispered. “Is not this right?”

“Quite right, and I was wrong; but you will still allow me to amuse myself with my present work,—at least for a time, will you not?”

“Amuse yourself, dear! certainly, but not kill yourself. Annette wishes to call for you to-morrow for a drive, and Mrs Hopkins expressed a wish to have you for a frequent companion. This you will not refuse, I hope. We can make no change in our cottage or expenditure, or indeed in anything, until matters are finally settled; then I hope we shall be able completely to relieve our darling from the heavy burden she has so long and patiently borne.”

Mrs Holmes acquiesced in everything, caring no longer for anything beyond her daughter's happiness and comfort. The evening passed pleasantly with music and reading. The chords of music were joyous, and indicated the gladness of grateful hearts.

On entering her room, Jane threw herself on

her knees ; here was always her resting-place. At first she could not speak ; her heart was too full for words, its beatings were too rapid to catch and express their own emotions. There was the uplifted eye, there was the uplifted hand, expressive of true devotion ; her whole being rose in praise and adoration to the great Ruler who had come to her rescue when she felt she must have fainted without Him. He had provided for her parents when their wants lay on her as a burden which was fast pressing her into the grave. Her work had been done ; her parents had been reconciled, and more than reconciled ; they had been taught as only God can teach, they had been changed as only God can change ; and she, all unworthy as she was, had been an honoured instrument in the hand of the Omnipotent One. True she had bent under the weight of her burden ; true she was even still weak and worn ; but she could rest. Should she ever feel strong again ? Should she ever feel like her former self, with her glad life rushing like a torrent through her veins ? Could she ever attempt what she had once done ?

Then she kneeled on, and poured out her rested, happy heart in words of love and power and of deep submission to her heavenly Father. "Not my will, not my will," she said, "but Thine always be done." The words of the Psalmist were in her mind as she retired to rest: "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication. I poured out my complaint before Him, I showed before Him all my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path. I cried unto thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low; bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name, The righteous shall compass me about; for Thou shalt deal bountifully with me. Praise the Lord, O my soul: while I live will I praise the Lord; I will sing praises unto the Lord while I have my being. Happy is he whose hope is in the Lord his God. The Lord raiseth up them that are bowed down. The Lord shall reign for ever."

With these words sounding in her ears, as if they were a message to her alone, she sank into a quiet, dreamless sleep, and did not awake until the first beams of the morning sun shone upon her face. Rising with glad heart, and with rested body and spirit, after her usual devotions, she entered the little room which she called her studio, in which were her paintings. After working for an hour successfully, the door suddenly opened, and her father stood beside her ; but alas ! in her overworked and nervous state the sudden start was too much, and her brush, full of paint, fell from her hand on to the picture, apparently spoiling all she had accomplished in many days of labour.

Her father was greatly vexed, and told her so ; but he explained that his anxiety had brought him to the room, in order that he might induce her to give herself a little more rest. Jane's eyes were full of tears of disappointment ; it was indeed a great blow. Suddenly the thought of her dream flashed on her, and a reaction took place, a bright vision danced before her eyes. Her father was, then, to be her friend,

and he was to save her from her present overwork perhaps. At all events, she was comforted, and, full of smiles, she betook herself to breakfast, that she might be ready for the assembling of her young pupils.

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

WHEN all was ready for the Confirmation lesson, Jane began—"In considering the nature of Confirmation yesterday, dear girls, we saw that, in the apostles' times, it had reference not only to the receiving the inward grace of the Spirit, by which the soul grows into the likeness of Christ, but the outward gift and manifestation of the Spirit, by which the truth of Christianity might be known, and might also be more rapidly spread amongst the surrounding heathen nations. As it is no longer needful for us to have the miraculous element in this rite continued, now that there are two hundred millions of nominal Christians in the world, or about one fifth or sixth part of the human family, we can only look for the inward

grace, which is given in answer to the prayer of the combined Church. I daresay you all remember that each Jewish child, at twelve years old, came to Jerusalem to eat the passover with his parents. At about the same age, or perhaps a little later, as English children do not develop so rapidly as the children of eastern lands,—say at fourteen or fifteen years old,—God expects the little ones of His flock to come to the Lord's Table, and eat there with the assembled people of God of the emblems of His death. You are all of a fit age, therefore, to be confirmed. I do hope that all will feel this to be a duty; but I spoke strongly about that yesterday.

“There are many ways which lie open to me to deal with the subject; perhaps the simplest is the best. I am dealing with those who have been admitted into Christ's Church by baptism. Each of you in your several names carries about with her the evidence of the fact. Harriet, Amy, Edith, Annie, Matilda, Euphemia, Nora, and Jessie are all Christian names—names which you did not receive when you

were born, but names which were given you by the clergyman when he sprinkled water upon you in the church in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and signed you with the then visible, but now invisible, sign of the Cross on your forehead. These are names given to you in the Church of Christ, which bind you to Christ's service, and which, so long as you carry them, and answer to them, and sign your names with them, bind you to everything which baptism into Christ, and union with Christ and Christ's Church, demand at your hands. It is a weak and foolish notion of some girls that they are not bound by baptismal vows until after their Confirmation. This is not so. They are just as much bound before as after, unless they fling from them their Christian names and the profession which their names imply. Whilst young persons regularly go to church, regularly read their Bibles, regularly pray to God morning and evening, and allow the world to suppose that they are Christians, and not heathens, they are in all honour bound by those vows which accompanied their admission

into Christ's body, the Church, and on the fulfilment of which must depend their obedience to Christ's laws and expressed wishes. It is best for us first to consider what we are, all of us, already bound to do, and afterwards what additional obligation will rest upon us after Confirmation has been administered as a rite of Christ's Church. What was promised by those who presented us at the font was, that we should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh ; that we should believe all the articles of the Christian faith, and that we should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life. There are but few words here, but in these words there is far more than I can possibly hope to unfold to-day. The renouncing of the devil is, as you know, often acted out, both in the Roman Catholic and in the Greek Churches, in a very expressive way by the baptizing clergyman ; but the exorcism is not sanctioned by any warrant of God's Word. The way to renounce the devil is to deny his authority :

'Get thee hence, Satan. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.' If we resist the devil, he will flee from us; he has no power over those who are God's children and under God's protection, except what he is permitted to have, or what they themselves give him. 'His servants ye are to whom ye obey.' If we obey the evil one, we are his servants, and place ourselves under his authority; or, rather, we continue to yield to him that obedience which all except the redeemed and ransomed of Christ give to the god of this world, for he is still the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience. As all of you well know, dear girls, our first parents' sin brought them under the dominion of the evil one; their sin alienated them from God, and made the devil their master and our master. The whole scheme of salvation turns on the one point of bringing us back to our first parents' original state of holy obedience to God, and holy trust in Him. The very first step which we take must therefore be to renounce the authority

and dominion of the evil spirit. Before God will have anything to do with us, we must take Him for our God, our Ruler, our Guide, our Protector, our loved and trusted Friend and Benefactor; for He is a very jealous God, who will not give His honour to another. In doing this, we must, as a matter of course, renounce all that has to do with the devil, who seduced our first parents from their allegiance, and who has filled the world with sighs and sorrow and death, making our fair earth a vast slaughter-house, and covering its plains with the bodies of those he has slain. All of us naturally, when we have heard what the evil one is, and what God is, would desire to avoid the evil spirit and his ways, and to give up our hearts to the God of love; but although we would run with terror from an open communication with the awful spirit of evil, and dread of all things His visible approach, yet unhappily we have within us, in our very hearts, and heads, and bodies, traitors in feelings, thoughts, and desires, which are for ever exposing us to be imposed on by him, and laying us open to the

slavery in which he longs to keep the human race. Even in the case of Jesus Christ Himself, there was no easy battle won. Although Christ had in Him no sin, although He was born differently from us, without any original sin, and with the most complete holiness, yet the temptations of the evil one—which in His case must have been visible or spoken—were so terrible and so exhausting that He fainted, and had to receive angels' help before He could commence His ministry amongst men. Now, if this was the case with Jesus Christ, who had no sin, how hard is the battle for us, who are filled with sin, and go astray from the time we are born! Our thought, then, this morning must be this—How shall we find strength in which to resist this awful enemy of our souls? how shall we find grace to help us in our time of need? Dear girls, I would say to you, although it would have been for us an utter impossibility to defeat Satan had he attacked us as he attacked Christ, it is not so now. It will require all our strength, and all our determination, and all our watchfulness, and the full conviction that it is no

light thing in which we are engaged, but the most difficult in the whole world. All this is true; but we have to deal with a beaten foe, with one vanquished. Satan has fallen from his heaven, and lies at the mercy of his Conqueror—the Stronger One who has overcome him. We may, then, notwithstanding all the traitors within us, undertake the great work in the strength of Jesus Christ, in whose name and into whose kingdom we were baptized. He will send His Spirit into our hearts, and into our heads, and into our bodies, to control those traitors that are ever dragging us towards the evil one—the devil; and He will make us more than conquerors in the glorious fight, fighting with us and fighting for us. He has given to us the armour, also, in which to fight. Our loins must be girt about with truth; we must put on the breastplate of righteousness; our feet must be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; we must have the shield of faith; we must have the helmet of salvation; we must have the sword of the Spirit. And before engaging in any fight, we

must pray earnestly, not for ourselves only, but for the whole army of Christian soldiers, and especially for the leaders of that army, that victory may flash from our helmets, and our swords be sharp and pointed, to enable us to drive back our persistent foe.

“Oh, dear girls,” she continued, “is it not a glorious battle in which to be engaged? fighting against evil, and sin, and sorrow, and death; fighting against the enemy of our race, and the enemy of truth; fighting with all that are good and all that are holy; fighting with God, and with Christ, and the Spirit; fighting as Jesus fought, and as Paul fought, and as John fought, and as all the holy ones of earth have fought, who now, amidst the hosts of heaven, bask in the sunshine of God’s love and holiness. We may feel weary sometimes, we may be wounded sometimes, we may feel ourselves vanquished; but as the giant of old fell and touched the earth, and rose again with renewed strength to the battle, so we, falling on Christ, and laying hold on His righteousness, even we, poor weak girls, shall spring up again,

and renew the fight till the cheer of victory comes, and the words float from afar, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'

"Amy, darling, it is your turn to-day. I shall take you before I go out to drive, if you don't mind."

A kiss was the only answer, but the tears that dropped fast on her face told how her spirit had been stirred within her. Indeed, there was not a face that did not exhibit deep emotion; nor could it well be otherwise, for the teacher had been so animated, and so borne away by her subject, that she had irresistibly swept before her all opposing views, and carried away her pupils by her excitement and intense feeling. They saw she was dealing with realities, which had existence in her own soul and in her own experience.

When the other pupils had retired, Amy Adams remained. Jane asked her whether anything had been said during the last two days about which she would like to ask any question. She bent her head, and for some time did not answer. However, after a while she said—

“Dear Miss Holmes, you know, I think, that I do wish to be God’s child, and intend to give myself up to Him, to be helped in every way to lead a holy life. Do you think it would help me much if I were to tell Mr Hardcastle all that is in my mind of good and of evil? If I were to tell him all the naughty, wicked thoughts that will come into my mind, would he be able to show me how to get rid of them? I don’t seem to like the idea of doing such a thing. I am ashamed to tell any one except God all the evil that is in me; but I would do anything, however unpleasant, if it would help me to love God more. Do tell me what you think, dear Miss Holmes?” •

Jane looked at the delicate, refined girl, and saw how she shrank away, as she would have done herself, from everything that did not draw her nearer to the source of all purity and holiness; and she answered—

“Dear Amy, on no account confess your sins and frailties to any confessor from amongst men. If you have done harm to any one, in thought or deed, tell the person you have

injured how deeply grieved you are for your sin. If there is any difficulty in your way which you cannot remove,—for instance, as to how far God will accept you, and how far aid you, and how far forgive you, the question may be asked. Your mind cannot be burdened with crime, nor have you been guilty of more than the ordinary sins of childhood, arising from an evil nature. Is this not so ?”

“Yes.”

“Then why should you go to any one but God? who has the right to come between your soul and God? It is your nearness to Him that makes you better; it is your communion with Him that makes you holy. It is the feeling that He knows all that is in you, and yet forgives you, that makes you love Him. The more you feel He knows and has forgiven, the more you love. When you confess your sins to Him, it does you good; it draws up your affections to Him, and elevates your whole nature. On the contrary, when you tell a sinful man like yourself sins of which you are ashamed, it degrades you in your own mind and in his,

and gives him power over you ever after. The more you tell him, the more degraded you seem; the more you confess, the more miserable you feel, until you are ready to do anything he requires at your hand. It is no longer your conscience as the voice of God which directs you, but the voice of a sinful man. It is, dear child, the greatest mistake you can make to think of such a thing. I do hope Mr Hardcastle did not urge you to do this. But now, to lead you to the right way, take as your best friend the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who dwells in your body, and makes it His temple. If you follow His holy leading, you will daily grow in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Ghost will reveal to you more and more fully. He is the great Fount and Author of all holiness and piety. He already knows all that is in you. You cannot tell Him anything that He does not know much more perfectly than you can tell Him. He knows, also, all the good in you, all the desires of your heart, just as well as all that is evil. He understands you far better than you can possibly understand

yourself, and therefore He is able to help you in a way that no creature could. And He is never weary—God cannot be weary. He is not cross to-day and kind to-morrow; He is unchangeably kind, and loving, and tender; and though, for your own sake, He will make you feel the bitterness of sin and your own folly, He will always breathe peace and trust into your heart. Our High Priest above, to whom we tell all our sins, sends Him to do the great work of sanctification in your heart. It is thus only that you can really attain to that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. Also remember, dear one, that the Bible was written by Him; it is His Word, from Genesis to Revelations; and He not only can, but does teach His people, those in whom He dwells, the meaning of His own Word, so that they are born again, of the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. I am truly glad you have spoken to me on the subject. You can tell the others what you asked me, and what I said; don't keep it to yourself."

CHAPTER XII.

THE VICAR.

JANE again enjoyed her drive immensely, and felt refreshed. She was anticipating another quiet evening with her parents, and was somewhat disappointed by the entrance of the Vicar, who said he had come to spend it with his friends, provided they did not object. Time passed pleasantly, with a good deal of cheerful conversation. Much that was interesting in the old town of Chester had lately been discovered, and this Mr Hardcastle told with spirit. A scheme for restoring and rebuilding the old cathedral was discussed with taste and judgment; light was thrown on the order of monks who used to live beside it; and music and singing followed.

After a while, business called Mr Holmes

away, and Mrs Holmes retired to arrange some household matter. Jane was left alone with Mr Hardcastle. This was an opportunity which he much desired, and one which Jane had also wished for, but for very different reasons. He thought, in her poverty and struggle, she might be induced to listen to his pleading, and that she might perhaps be willing to become his wife ; whilst she, on the contrary, was anxious to ask him about Amy Adams, and to ascertain whether he had urged on her the necessity of confession. He saw she was pleased to have an opportunity of speaking to him alone, and hesitated not to speak first.

“ I have greatly desired to have a few words with you in private, Miss Holmes, but I have not been fortunate enough to find you alone or disengaged for some time past. I must therefore make good use of the present opportunity.”

Jane replied quietly, “ I did not know that you had anything to say which could not as well be said before my parents, or indeed before any one ; but as it happens, I am glad also to be

alone this evening, for I want to speak to you about Amy Adams. Surely you did not ask that poor girl to confess her sins to you. She is really very nice and piously inclined, but she has little mind, and I can hardly believe you urged her to such a course. I don't think you would ask me to do such a thing."

"Yes, indeed, Miss Holmes. I should much like you to tell me all that is in your heart. There is nothing I long for so much."

Jane replied, "I never make any one acquainted with my thoughts but God. I dare not bare my soul before the best and holiest of God's creatures. To none but God Himself could I tell what He knows already far better than I know myself. It relieves me to tell Him, though, after all, I do not tell Him anything, for He has searched me and known me. He knoweth my down-sitting and mine uprising—yea, He knoweth my thoughts long before I know them myself. Man would misjudge me, and could not help me."

"Forgive me, dear Miss Holmes; a man's sympathy is worth having, whatever you may

think to the contrary. A man's help is not to be despised, if he is a real and true friend."

"Yes, I grant so far ; but not in the confessional. He has no business with my secrets, and certainly no business with my sins. His own are quite enough for him, and all too much."

"Dear Miss Holmes, no confessor hears confession which is not willingly made, and which it is not a relief to the penitent to make. He does not hear it because he likes to hear it, but because his self-denial in the matter helps another. Does not the wife tell her husband what she cannot bear alone ? when it is told it is easily borne, for two can carry what wearies one. The daughter tells her mother of her mistakes, and is forgiven and happy once more ; why should not the same thing happen in the case of the confessor?"

"When he is her husband or her mother, he may hear some things safely for himself and for her who confesses, but not before. He puts himself into the husband's place, and this is wrong, and in the mother's place, and this is

bad also ; but still worse, he puts himself in the place of God. But it is all bad together. No, no, my dear sir ; you will never persuade me that confession to a man is anything else than an intolerable evil, and a cruel mockery of intended relief from sin. Pardon cannot possibly come from man, for who can forgive sins but God only ?”

“ I fear, dear lady, we are straying far away from what I intended or wished ; but I must, I suppose, answer your question. Did not Christ say to His apostles, after He had given them the Holy Ghost, ‘ Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained ’ ? and did He not also say to Peter, ‘ I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven ’ ? ”

“ Well, Mr Hardcastle, and what then ? You don’t mean to say that you are an apostle, or that any man can claim the power of an apostle ? Or do you mean to tell me that you have the power to open or shut the gates of heaven for or against any of your penitents ? An awful power to claim ! You surely do not

mean to tell me you believe you have such a power?"

"Well, what does it mean then? Is not the power lodged with the Church of Christ?"

"Surely the words are perfectly simple, viz., that Jesus gave the apostles power to preach the truth, so that they could make no mistake as to the terms on which heaven was to be opened or shut. The most that Protestant divines have ever made of these words is, that, as a body, the Church has power to govern itself and its members. If the Church is to be an organised body at all, it must have this power. Even a father could not rule his house if he had not a certain authority to do so, nor could a mistress conduct her school unless a certain power of control was placed in her hands. Beyond this, all application of the words would lead us into the worst errors of Romanism, unless, indeed, you confined their application to the inspired, heaven-guided, and heaven-directed apostles, whose language at times is such as no man would now dare to use who

calls himself a member of the Church of England."

"Well, dear Miss Holmes, I fear we are destined to disagree about these things; and yet, God knows, my most earnest desire is to secure your co-operation and sympathy in my difficult position. I do need some one like you to help me. If you would be that one, if I might dare to ask you to become my helper, we might correct each other's views, and mould our minds into some middle and safe form."

"You are always welcome to any help I can give you, my dear sir, so far as my little time allows. My co-operation in all that is good you know you have always had; but I greatly fear, unless your views change, and change a good deal, that our minds are likely to diverge farther from each other."

"I fear you have not quite understood what I meant to say, dear lady."

Here the door opened. Mr and Mrs Holmes returned, and asked Mr Hardcastle if he would kindly conduct the family prayer. The opportunity had passed away, and he could never

quite understand whether Jane grasped his meaning or not. He meant to make her an offer of his hand. Had she refused him, or had she not really taken in his meaning? It was an awkward position. He had gone too far or he had not gone far enough; he had said too much or too little? Should he try again? should he ask once more? or should he desist? If he did not ask again, he should be saved from a positive refusal, and he greatly feared that such might be his fate—one very undesirable on many accounts. But then, if he did not ask, he might absolutely lose her from want of courage. On the whole, he was fairly puzzled, and returned home to lie awake until the morning, when he rose unrefreshed and utterly weary.

And what thought Jane? She knew perfectly well all that was in his mind, and all that he had meant to say; but, much as she esteemed him for many good and excellent qualities, she dreaded his unsettled state of mind, and his tendency to adopt the fashionable opinions of the day, which sooner or later would lead him

Romeward; so, without giving him needless pain, she had purposely answered as though she did not understand him. She had, however, fully made up her mind not to allow him a like opportunity for urging his suit.

Many things now came to her mind which showed her that his attachment was of older standing than she at first imagined, and that her father had some reason for what he had once said to her. She felt sorry for him, and prayed earnestly that he might be led into the right way, and guided by the good Spirit into all truth. She hoped, also, that she had not given him encouragement; but still she felt pained and sensitive on the subject, and it by no means added to her happiness to feel that she had given him pain.

There was a sigh for the rest she wanted, and for the strong support which woman's nature often longs after. She was to a great extent perhaps unconscious of this, and could only realise the one strong desire for rest which she sought in the sweet communion and fellowship of her covenant father, her faithful

and unfailing Friend who knew all her sorrows and all her needs.

“I will lay me down and take my rest,” she said; “for it is Thou, Lord only, that maketh me to dwell in safety.”

CHAPTER XIII.

THIRD LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

IT was with very mixed feelings that Jane entered on her Confirmation teaching, a few mornings after her interview with Mr Hardcastle. She should not have engaged in it but that she had been asked to do so by him as her Vicar, in order that her girls might be the better able to answer his printed questions. She felt that her teaching was doing good, and that it was pleasant to herself, but she felt also that when the papers were answered they might give anything but satisfaction. The position was one of mixed pain and pleasure ; her duty, however, was clear, and she must not shrink from it, so she continued—

“And now, as it becomes the duty of all baptized persons to renounce the devil and all

his works, so it is also needful for them to give up the pomp and vanity of this evil world. To my own mind, since I have learned to love God and to devote myself to His service, there has always been the feeling that the simpler we are in everything the happier we become, and that the highest simplicity as well as the highest glory will be in heaven. It is perhaps somewhat difficult for you to understand. There is nothing more simple than the light, yet there is nothing more beautiful, either when it shines white in the complete mingling of its colours, or when it is broken up into its component parts. The rays of the sun and the rainbow are alike simple and alike beautiful. What is more simple than the beauty of flowers, and yet what is more exquisite? What is more pure and simple than water, and yet how grand it is in the floating clouds that assume every shape of beauty, and are tinged with every variety of colour. See the beauty of water also in the wide river, as it flows silently onward, and in the majestic ocean, as it rolls its billows to the

shore! All nature is simple. The majestic mountain in its grand look of rest, the glorious lake in its serene beauty, the forest trees in their foliage, with the shadows playing amidst them, these are all as simple as they are beautiful. In heaven I believe much of the beauty will depend on the extreme simplicity of the surroundings. Holiness is not complex, but simple. Obedience is not complex, but simple. Light, though it assumes a thousand forms, is simple; and the modifications of sound are some of the very simplest things when you understand and have grasped their laws. With God all must be simple, because He understands all things so perfectly, and requires no clumsy contrivance to bring about His end. All must be simple because He is all-powerful, and goes to work in the shortest possible way. The whole of heaven is dazzling with light and glory. Every heart there is filled with delight. Every sound heard there is instinct with pleasure—just because all is simplicity, and just because one law cannot traverse another. There is only one

mind filling all ; there is only one will guiding all ; there is only one desire occupying all ;— and though there may be millions upon millions of beings of every grade there, yet there is the perfect unity of a single body, because all has been reduced to the extreme of simplicity. If I am at all right or correct in this, then, it gives us a clue to our real happiness on earth ; for surely the more nearly we can here approach the heavenly state the more complete our happiness will become. I believe, also, that this is hidden from us by our enemy, and that pomp and vanity are introduced into the world to blind men, and encourage all that is evil. No man will tell you that he is the happier because he has four horses and fourteen servants ; he sighs for the time when he lived more simply. No woman will tell you she is the happier for having half a dozen dressmakers to expend their skill in adorning her person, and three or four servants specially to dress and undress her, that she may exhibit herself and her finery before the eyes of those who cannot afford to dress so well. She knows it is a kind of slavery to

fashion, and though the chains are of gold, and diamonds flash on her hair and breast and fingers, she often sighs for more quiet, and more freedom,—and is never half so happy as when she has escaped to some country place or some foreign town, where she can attend on herself, and do just as she pleases, because nobody knows her. A woman is never so happy as when she is at a game of romps with her children, and has forgotten all about her dress, and diamonds, and servants. A girl is never so happy as when she roams the fields in search of wild flowers and fruits, and is laughing in unrestrained liberty amongst the beauteous scenes of nature. Sin has, however, made us all slaves, and the world is a cruel tyrant, that exacts from its slaves an obedience that galls and vexes. There is, no doubt, a delight in it; but it is the delight of vanity, and pride, and jealousy. It is the delight not in the things themselves—but in their being better than those of our neighbours. The pleasure exists by the destruction of love—love to our neighbour.' I think it is as well we should fully

understand this. If we do not, we shall not see good reasons for desiring to abstain from the love of the world and the following out of the world's ways and maxims. In themselves there is no harm in gems of exquisite beauty or in their setting of gold. God has made them both; and has given the taste and the skill to cut and mould them into forms of beauty. The evil lies in an inordinate love for them, which makes us secure them with too great an effort of time or labour, or in some unworthy way; or in order to a display which is galling to some one else, and draws out her evil passions.

In themselves there is no harm in silks and garments of exquisite taste and beauty. God has supplied the materials, and has also given the taste and the skill; the evil lies in the undue care for a body of sin, and the desire to appear in a place which does not belong to us. The hurry, the press, the crush, the love of the world, what is it all for? Not to please God; not to benefit our neighbours; not to preserve body and mind in the best state in

which to serve God and man ; but to please ourselves, nay, often to please ourselves at the expense of both God and man. No wonder God has said, ' Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world : if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' We sometimes see these things better in our inferiors, and we do not fail to express our disapproval of the way servants dress, making the most grotesque and absurd imitation of their mistresses. In order to do so, not only will they deny themselves the garments on which their real health depends, but they will be guilty of sin in order to ape what they cannot really reach. What we see and what vexes us in servants runs equally through all ranks where the love of the world exists ; and therefore we ought once and for all to give up the pomp and vanity of this wicked world. But I must not let you misunderstand me. There is a great difference in the position and the wealth that God bestows on men, and it seems clearly to be His will to keep up these distinctions of wealth and rank. He did so

amongst the Jews. The whole order of nature and the very members of our body teach us the same lesson.

“To give up the pomps and vanities of this wicked world does not imply that all rank should be levelled, and that all distinction should cease. It merely confines the exhibition of rank and distinction to such things as are good, and holy, and pure,—to such things as are clearly for the interest of society at large, and which are undertaken from the pure love of God, and the unselfish love of our fellow-man. There is no danger of pomp and vanity when all that we do is regulated by the pure and unerring law of God. But I fear our lesson has already extended almost too far. It is you, Edith, who would like to remain to-day, is it not?”

At the close of school Edith James remained. The subject of the lesson was one which was attractive to her, and yet it was one that pained her also. When Jane said to her, “Well, Edith, and what say you, bright and giddy child, to all we have talked about? what says

your heart and fanciful brain to all that has passed to-day ?”

Edith looked very grave, yet with a smile she said, “Dear Miss Holmes, when God made all the beautiful stars which you tell us are many-coloured, like glorious gems in the sky, and when God clothed the very earth with exquisite flowers, and when there is not a cave that does not flash with beauty ; when birds are painted in gorgeous colours, when everything around us is clothed in beauty, and, most of all, our thoughts and imaginings of heaven—why is it that we must be such humdrum, stupid beings here in order to please God ?”

“I expected you to say something like this, dear ; but did I say that you must be either humdrum or stupid ?”

“No, you did not ; but it must be humdrum enough when we have no bright dresses, and pretty ornaments, when we have no handsome carriages, and liveried servants, when glass and plate do not glitter on our tables, and when mirrors do not reflect beautiful rooms, and richly dressed people ; it must be humdrum

indeed when you put away all these things—and people call these things worldly; when we have no paintings—and you know you are fond of them; and when we have no music and dancing—and you know you love music dearly. I can't make it out, the world would not be worth living in if you take away all the delights of life."

"Edith darling, you know you are clever and bright, but I do believe you also desire to be happy in God's way, for you do long to be His child. I will not therefore speak to you as to a simple worldling, who has not sense enough to distinguish between his soul and his eyes and ears. Senses are one thing, the soul is quite another. Here we live for the soul, and real happiness is the happiness of the soul, and not of the body alone. You have been speaking wholly of the outside of things, and of how far the outside of things ministers to the happiness and well-being of the man or woman. I will grant you at once that where they can lawfully be attained without creating selfishness, every species of beauty and refinement ministers to the happiness of the

whole man; but I will not grant you that they must belong to us, and are essential to the full and complete enjoyment of the soul of the man, and to the full and perfect growth of happiness and holiness in the individual. You must take your stand on duty—God first, man's good next, yourself last. I maintain the highest happiness of man or woman must lie in the following out of this rule of life. If we live wholly for God, God will fill us with a happiness that is inconceivable, and which requires no aid from surrounding objects. If we live for the good of our fellow-men, and thus strip ourselves of selfishness, the happiness that will be borne in on us will surprise us, and make us to a very great extent independent of those things which minister to the happiness of the generality of people. This life is by no means humdrum or devoid of interest. It is filled with the fullest and most perfect of all interests. As to stupidity, there is not one moment which can be called stupid. We have linked ourselves to the universe, and the God of

the universe ; if they cannot fill our souls with joy and interest, what can ? That an immortal being should try to satisfy himself or herself with the toys of earth which perish in the using, is too childish even for you ; and that an immortal soul should find pleasure in dress and mirrors and all such things, in themselves, is what my Edith cannot for one moment maintain with any satisfaction to herself. Besides which, dear Edith, you will see that you make your happiness depend, not on the general wealth and beauty of external things, but on the wealth and beauty of what is your own. Your living in a simple way does not destroy all the glory of the world that is around you. I may enjoy the works of God and the labour of man just as much in the park of the people, or in the park of a nobleman, as in my own. The mistake is that the happiness of the worldling is a full development of intense selfishness. His wealth would be no wealth to him unless it made him the object of envy, or unless it ministered to unholy passion, or the pampering

of the flesh. God allows us to enjoy to the full all we can share with others—all that will really do our souls good—or refresh our bodies ; but He will not allow the world to be His rival, or to claim a place that belongs to Him alone. He must have all our affection, and all our love, and all our gratitude, and we must hang on Him, and on Him alone, for our happiness, enjoyment, and improvement. Do you understand what I mean, dear child ?”

“Yes, I think I do understand a little better. We may be just as bright and as happy as we please, and use every outward means of enjoyment, provided we give God the first place in our affections and thoughts. But is not this very difficult ?”

“Yes, it is very, very difficult. The gate is strait and the road narrow that leads to heaven ; and sometimes we must agonise to enter in and to walk along. But then, see the end ! glory, brightness, reward of grace, enjoyment, pleasures at God’s right hand for evermore ! And see the sustaining power, love, wondrous love

to the dear Redeemer, that has done so much for us. By this the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world.”

A few silent tears fell, and then one bright smile lit up the face of Edith James, and showed that she was satisfied.

CHAPTER XIV.

FOURTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

ON the next morning Jane was very much astonished to find that Mr Hardcastle had left Chester for some months, and had entrusted the care of his parish for the time to his curate. He had called at the house of Mrs Partridge, and complained of being overdone and overworked, and had felt, he said, compelled to give himself rest on the instant. Euphemia said her mother had told her that he really looked ill, and that she had not remembered to have seen any one so changed in a short time. Jane felt she knew at all events part of the reason of this. It was to some extent a relief to her; but she liked Mr Hardcastle, and was greatly grieved at his suffering. She hoped that in the end he might preach the truth in its sim-

plicity and power ; for he was really a man of some spirituality of mind, and very much concerned for the well-being of his people. Silently she prayed that God would comfort him, and also show him the way clearly in externals, and lead him away from those who were now drawing him into dangerous error. How far she was herself right in refusing to aid him in the matter she hardly dared to ask herself. Now that he was gone, the pity she felt towards him tended greatly to soften her heart, and it was with even more difficulty than before that she engaged her pupils in the consideration of the Confirmation subject.

“To-day we have before us, dear girls, the consideration of something which we are called on to renounce as much as the devil and the world, namely, the sinful lusts of the flesh. Here I think it will be well for us to consider what is not sinful, so that we may be better enabled to ascertain what is sinful in the desires which arise from our flesh. A good many mistakes have been made in the matter; and whilst there is any confusion in the mind on these

matters, the conscience is apt to be wounded unnecessarily, especially in the case of such young persons as those before me. These mistakes have led men and women to retire into monasteries and convents for the purpose of mortifying the body, and putting it not only to great pain, but also subjecting it to great privation, denying it not only food, but even the care necessary to preserve health and cleanliness. I need hardly tell you that God never intended this. We have in scripture no warrant for anything of this kind. The only two characters in scripture which in any way point to this are those of John the Baptist and Elijah. In the case of Elijah it was a matter of necessity. He was obliged to hide himself from Ahab. He was indeed very simply, and roughly clothed, as a protest against the exceeding luxuriousness of the age and the court as led by Ahab and Jezebel ; but he was well fed in the wilderness by God's own hand always. As to John the Baptist, he lived in the wilderness more as a sign to the people of the age, in order to attract their attention to his being a prophet like Elijah. This gave him power

to preach Christ's coming with more weight. He also was well, though coarsely clothed, and had ample, though very simple, food in the locusts of the desert, and the wild honey which was found in great abundance in the rocks. The highest example, and the only perfect one, is that of Christ Himself. He was well but simply clothed, and He ate whatever was placed before Him, using the simple food or the most expensive, as the case might be, and using wine when wine was offered. He mixed up also freely with all classes, rich and poor. His retirement from the crowd was always and only for the purpose of prayer and meditation, and to deepen His human energies by a fuller communion and fellowship with His Father in heaven. By a little thought, we can, then, easily ascertain what desires of the flesh are not sinful. Any desire which was in Adam before he fell—any desire which was in Christ Jesus when He was on the earth, is and must be in its very nature sinless. Moreover, there are certain instincts which we have, that are absolutely needful for the preservation of health and even life. If we did not listen to the

voice of nature when it told us of cold and hunger, and thirst, and want of sympathy and companionship, we should become not only careless of life, but absolute suicides. The desires of the flesh which lead us to be careful for the preservation of the body and mind in their full perfection are sinless, and are placed in our minds by our kind and loving Father for the best purposes. So long as we keep strictly to them, our conscience need never be wounded. It is only when we pass from these natural instincts to something very different, that we must fear sinful lusts. What, then, are these? The simplest view one can take of them is this—they are lusts and desires which are absolutely forbidden, and are sinful because they are forbidden; for sin really is in every case disobedience. We have then before us what is as plain as it is possible to make anything. What desire of the flesh has God forbidden? what does our Lord say? 'Out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murder, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride,

foolishness.' Here is a fearful array of forbidden desires. But He goes on in another place to say, 'Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor for the body, what ye shall put on ; is not the life more than meat ? and the body than raiment ? Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.' If God clothe the grass, shall He not clothe you ? if God feed the sparrow, shall He not feed you ? The morrow shall take thought for itself ; 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' Daily care for the body we may have ; beyond that nothing is allowed but trust in God ; and He illustrates the folly of care by the case of the fool with the full barn, who died just when he thought he had made the most perfect provision. We shall have to recur to some of those sinful thoughts and lusts when we consider the commandments separately. Meanwhile I hope you have a clear and distinct notion of what is allowed and what is forbidden. I do not think it will be needful for me to press on you the intense happiness of confining our desires to what God allows, and the intense

misery of allowing these to place us daily and hourly in opposition to God, calling down on us His wrath and just indignation. He has allowed us all that is good for us here and hereafter, and has, moreover, promised to make these things His special care. It is the madness of sin that blinds us to our own interest, and makes us defy the God of love in the following out the unholy and rebellious thoughts which rush from our unholy and rebel nature. The more we control these thoughts, the more we shall be like Jesus. The more we fight against them, the more peace shall we obtain from the indwelling spirit of holiness. The more we crucify the abominable lusts of our nature, the more shall we resemble the angels in heaven. And remember, dear pupils, that now is the time for the battle. If you let these evil desires gain force, they will be too strong for you by and by. If you let an evil habit once get hold of you, it becomes part of your nature, so that to get rid of it by and by will be like pulling out an eye, or cutting off a right foot or a right hand. Now, when your minds are easily moulded, fight well.

‘Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.’ It will be too late by and by. The crown hangs above, held by Jesus’ hands. The flag of victory floats on the turrets of the heavenly city. The songs of angels are prepared for the little one who wins the fight. Others have won a harder battle; and all who like may win in His strength. As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word of God, and you will grow strong and pure, nourished by the heavenly diet. Annie Wright, it is your turn to remain this day, I think.”

Annie accordingly remained. Her manner was very cold and haughty. As Jane looked at the clever girl, her heart nearly failed her; yet she knew that there was strength and help for her above, and so she lifted up her prayer, silent and deep, to the God of all spirits. As she did so she felt suddenly faint, and would have fallen but that Annie saw her danger, and ran forward to support her.

Jane lay very still, and was indeed quite unable to go on with her work. This drew out all the affection of Annie’s nature. She called

for what was needful, would not allow her to speak for some time, and then in a quiet but firm way, begged her to put off her lesson until after Sunday next. Mrs Holmes seconded all she urged, and so it was arranged.

No Confirmation lesson was given on the Monday, but after school was over, and that Jane felt brighter than usual, Annie came to her. She did not wait for Jane to speak, but at once said, "Dear Miss Holmes, you are far from well. I had meant to dispute as much of what you said as I could, especially about withdrawing from the world, and living in close companionship with holy men and women; but I have thought better of it, and fought the battle out by myself on Saturday and Sunday. I examined my Bible carefully, and prayed much. Please do not mention this to any one. God has been pleased to show me that you are right and that I was wrong. Thank you very much for saying all you have said, I hope I shall never forget it. I will not allow you to fatigue yourself for me; so please let me only thank you, and go away;" and she kissed

her good teacher affectionately, and left on the instant.

Jane could hardly believe her senses. So the proud clever girl had been taken in hand by God Himself, and He had saved her what it must be confessed she dreaded exceedingly. She did not dread being able to convince Annie in the end, but she did dread the long argument as more than her strength would bear, and now God had made all easy. "Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me, bless His holy name."

CHAPTER XV.

FIFTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

ON the Tuesday, in better health and spirits, feeling much more equal for her work, Jane again took up the subject of Confirmation by saying—

“I am greatly pleased and delighted by the kind spirit in which my imperfect instruction has been met, and I thank you all most heartily for the kind consideration you have shown to one so weak as I am. We have seen what each person who is to be confirmed has to renounce, and now we come to what is required besides : secondly, that we should believe all the articles of the Christian faith—these we shall examine at once in the Creed ; and thirdly, that we should keep God’s holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days

of our life. This we must consider when we examine, in a cursory way, the ten commandments. We have now before us the examination of the Apostles' Creed. Of course, anything I say upon it must be of the simplest kind, for there is matter enough in it for many volumes. The foundation of all faith and of all religion is belief in God. 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' The Creed then opens with a profession of belief in God—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. But first of all our faith is professed in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. The Son is also Almighty and a Creator. The Holy Ghost is also Almighty and a Creator. That which distinguishes the first Person of the Trinity is that He is the Father—the Father of all men and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Father because He made us, because He preserves us, because He redeemed us in Christ, because He adopted us into His family, because He sanctifies us by His Spirit, and because,

besides giving us new souls, in a new birth, He will give us new bodies at the resurrection. Briefly, He is our Father by creation, preservation, redemption, adoption, sanctification, and resurrection. Do not forget all these claims on our love ; they are very strong, and may not be put aside, unless we are intensely ungrateful, or sottishly stupid ; we will not dare to dispute that being such a God and such a Father to us as He is, He can claim from us every thought, every feeling, and every desire. But besides being the Father of all men and all angels, He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this in a double way. He is the Father of His divine nature in a way that we cannot in the very least understand. Although the second Person of the Trinity, the Son is from everlasting, and although He is equal to the Father, but although He holds all the essence of deity, all the spiritual substance of the Godhead, equally with the Father, yet He is from the Father, His co-equal, and co-eternal Son. This truth is clearly revealed in God's Word, but it is so completely above reason, that we can

only bow our heads and accept it. It is not contrary to our reason, but far, far above anything that our human nature touches. We do not and cannot understand the nature of God, for He is infinite and we only finite. The manner of His being the Father of the eternal Son is hopelessly beyond and above the highest capacity of man. In another sense God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in His human nature. This also is a deep mystery, but not so deep as the other. The Son of God, the second Person of the eternal Trinity, for our salvation took upon Him our nature, and joined it to the nature of God. This was done by the power of the Highest, causing the Virgin Mother to bring forth Jesus, the Son of God. 'That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' In this sense God was the Father of Jesus Christ in His human nature. By His power Christ was born holy and pure, and without any stain of sin. He had not as all the rest of the human family two parents, but only one. He was filled with the Holy Ghost

from His birth. This was the old prophecy—as old as Adam: ‘the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.’ Mary’s Son shall crush the power of the devil. But Jesus is called God’s only Son. We are the sons of God, it is true, but in a very different way. Jesus is God’s only Son in this sense that He is the only one who holds or has His Father’s nature and essence. The Creed goes on then to tell us, that at the time when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Jesus Christ was crucified, not simply in appearance, but in reality; that He absolutely died and was buried. There were some of old who maintained that Christ did not really die, but only seemed to die. But this could not be, because the evidence of the broken heart was there. There came from His side, pierced by the spear of the soldier, blood and water. ‘My heart is melted in the midst of my body.’ The life of Christ is here passed over. But it is spanned by His birth and death. He took our nature; in that nature kept all the commandments of God for us perfectly; in that nature

was tempted in all points like unto us without once sinning; and when He had wrought out for us the marriage robe of His complete righteousness, laid down His life for the sins of the whole world. No man took His life from Him; He laid it down as an offering to the Father for all our sins; and when all was over, on the cruel cross exclaimed, 'It is finished,' and gave up the ghost. When He died all sin was pardoned, all iniquity was forgiven to all that take Him for a Saviour, for on Him was laid the iniquities of us all. When Christ died He was taken from the cross, and laid in a new tomb wherein never man lay. His body was anointed on the Friday evening, and His soul walked through the regions of the damned, bursting the gates of death and hell, for in Him was no sin, and He was the Lord. On Sunday, in the early morning, He rose from the grave in beauty, now accepted of the Father, who by His resurrection declared that He was satisfied with the offering He had made. After forty days, during which He gave innumerable proofs of His resurrection, in the presence of a number of

persons He ascended up to heaven. They gazed as long as they could, but a cloud received the spiritual body from the sight, and it rose instantly to the throne of God, and there as the Head of the redeemed and ransomed Church, sat down at God's right hand, the angels who stood on earth declaring that as He ascended, so should He descend again, as He will do, to judge all those who are then living and those who before that time have died. We may not, I think, to-day go further with the Creed than this ; but oh, how happy we should be to believe all the most comforting assurance of God the Father's deep love and tender care for us, and of God the Son's work for our full and free salvation. Surely there is salvation in no other name under heaven, for there is none given by which we can hope for it, but only the name of the all-loving and tender Jesus, who bears our nature in heaven, joining together God and man in His own person. Ever living to make intercession for us, Christ sends us down gifts from on high. All that can stir the heart to belief and

love is here; all that can make us live holy and true lives is in these few sentences; all that can influence man for good is here. Matilda, I shall be glad to see you after school."

"Well, dear," she said when she had remained, "and what say you to our five lessons on the Catechism? Do you think you have understood them fully? or should you like to ask me any questions?"

Matilda turned her rings on her fingers, fiddled nervously with her gold chain, looked at her beautiful watch, shook her rich dress, and at length said, "Do you know, Miss Holmes, that I am really very hungry. You seem never to mind about eating till you can't help it. I think we should both be the better of something to eat, and I have my little basket with me, with some grapes, some cake, and some good wine. May I bring it in?"

Jane smiled a sad smile and assented. It was perhaps the best thing she could do with this wealthy, selfish girl. She would, at all events, so far as she could, show her sympathy.

When the lunch was finished, to Matilda

Hopkin's satisfaction, Jane renewed her question. It could no longer be evaded, and it pressed rather uncomfortably ; so, after looking from the window to see if there was any sign of her carriage, she at length said, " You know I am an only child. Papa is always busy in town during the day, and mamma only thinks of dressing me and making me comfortable ; and my life is very happy. The only time I feel uncomfortable is when you look at me with your beautiful eyes, that go through and through me. And when I go to bed, sometimes I dream of your eyes, and then I think they are God's eyes, and I am very unhappy. I don't see what is the good of being unhappy. No one makes me unhappy but you, and I don't think it kind of you. Could you not let me take my own way for the next few weeks, and then I shall be done with it all ? Indeed, I don't care about Confirmation, and that is the fact. I want to be left alone."

This was said with an air of injury, and as if Jane had really done her an injustice. It was not very hopeful, but still there was a something

on which to work. So she said, "Dear Matilda, please listen to me. I shall not be very long and must try my best not to puzzle you. You say you are an only child, and that your father and mother take a great deal of trouble to make and keep you happy. Now suppose you say to them this evening when you see them both together, 'My dear parents, you are very good and very kind, but I don't want your kindness one bit; and I beg that hereafter you will let me alone, and let me do just as I like.' What do you suppose they would say?"

"I think they would call me very ungrateful, and so I should be."

"Very well, dear. And now suppose they said to you, 'Very well, Matilda. We had meant to make you very rich one of these days, and to see you settled in a house of your own; but as you don't care about our taking any trouble in the matter, and want to be let alone, suppose you go upstairs and take off your pretty dress, and all your rings, and your watch, and your chain, and leave the house for ever. Good-bye! We hope you may be more

happy in your own way.' What would you say to this?"

"What a horrible thing to think of! Oh, it is too horrible! They could not say that."

"But would they not be quite justified in saying it?"

"Yes, I suppose they would."

"And you would not like it?"

"Like it! I should think not."

"Now, dear, this is just what you are doing with God. He is kinder than any parent can possibly be; but He is very wisely kind, and wants you to do things you don't like to do; and you turn round and say, 'I wish you would let me go my own way; it is very pleasant, and I don't care to be disturbed.' Would God not be justified in saying to you, 'Go! depart from me. You will not that I should care for you; depart into outer darkness without my care. There you will have your own way, but it ends in weeping, and sighing, and gnashing of teeth.' This is what you are now trying to get God to do. Should you like Him to do it?"

"I suppose you are right; but you make me

very uncomfortable and very miserable. Must I really be God's just yet in order to be happy hereafter?"

"Certainly, dear child. You don't know that you may not be killed as you are going home to-night. You might be thrown out of the carriage, or, in eating, a bone of fish or chicken may get into your throat, or a thousand things may happen to cause death. You have no time but the present. To-morrow is God's day, not yours; and He says, 'To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts.' The Jews tried to put off, and they were lost. Don't you try it, or you may be lost too."

Jane spoke, as she felt, very seriously. The impression she made was greater than she could have supposed possible. A flood of tears and the heaving of the breast told how deeply Matilda felt what she said. So she did what she could to soothe her, chiefly by an earnest prayer to God that He would be pleased to open her eyes, and show her that her real and true happiness lay in the way of serving Him with her whole heart and soul.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MUSICAL PARTY.

IN the evening, Jane was agreeably surprised to find some friends assembled by her father and mother for a little music. They felt rightly that it would help her to throw off the strain which her Confirmation class and her enforced instruction to her pupils involved.

Amongst those present, there were two who deeply interested her. One was a clergyman, a man of large property, who had come to supply Mr Hardcastle's place for some months. He was, he said, an old college friend, and it seemed a great relief to Mr Hardcastle to have some one he knew so well to look after his parish. Mr Lionel de Burgh was one of those charming Irishmen of high principle and education that one meets with from time to time. His

spirits were unfailing, his manner courteous, his anecdotes without end; and last of all, but best of all, his piety was deep. His views were those which Mr Hardcastle himself had held whilst in college; they were strictly Church of England views, the views held by the Reformation Church in its best days. Brought face to face with Romanists on his Irish property, he had seen the working of the system amongst those he was most anxious to benefit. He had not confined his observations to Ireland, or to his own property, but had extended them to France, and Spain, and Austria, and Italy. The more he observed, the more he was confirmed in the opinion, that the Church of England should hold her own ground of protesting against errors which had done so much harm, and which were even now doing infinite mischief. The woman who with craft introduced the leaven and let it work until the whole was leavened, seemed to him the image most appropriate to this time, when the Protestant Church was seemingly inclined to accept some of Rome's leaven without fearing any evil consequences.

Jane was greatly interested, and looked forward with great pleasure to her Sundays at church, and to the help she would receive in the preparation of the pupils for Confirmation. In questions, also, that somewhat puzzled her own clear and decided mind, she felt the rest of knowing that she had near her one whom she could consult with all confidence.

The conversation turned on Mr Hardcastle. Mr de Burgh said he feared, from what his friend had told him, that he had met with some terrible disappointment. He looked, he said, like one who was crushed to the earth, and who could not easily recover from his distress. The sudden flush on Jane's face told Mr de Burgh more perhaps than she intended, so he rapidly changed the conversation to other subjects. Their conversations were held between the pauses of music and song, and were most refreshing.

The other who so much interested Jane was one of the merchants of Liverpool, an old and loved friend, and a man of great goodness of heart, that is, real piety and largeness of mind—one who never would say, and rarely

would think, any wrong of any one. He had considerable skill in music, played the violin with great taste and power, and sang with a sweet tenor voice. Mr Pendleton, when he could find the opportunity, talked to Jane first of the brightening prospects of her parents, praised her in his quiet but pleasant way for the manner in which she had acted, and hoped that, ere long, they should see her resume her old place amongst a circle of friends who had now learned to value her more than ever. He then began to describe the improvements which he was making in his grounds near Clampton, and asked her opinion respecting the form and shape of flower beds, and the extent to which greenhouses might be carried. Jane felt as if she were dreaming again, and had some difficulty in rousing herself to make the required effort ; but soon, pencil in hand, she found herself tracing out the form of some beds she had greatly admired, suggesting, at the same time, a modification of them. She found herself also tracing with rapid but rather unsteady hand the form and extent of glass for an ideal garden.

On retiring to rest at a somewhat later hour than usual, she found her mind in strange confusion and bewilderment. Her dream had so become mixed up with reality, and her feelings and sympathies had been so drawn out in totally opposite directions, that when she fell asleep at length, after committing herself to God's care and guidance, it was to dream over and over again that she was walking with some one whose face she could not see, and to feel her sympathies drawn out towards some one with a sweet and soft voice, who always persistently held his face away from her. With heightened spirits, but an unrested body, she resumed her Confirmation work in the morning.

CHAPTER XVII.

SIXTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

“**D**EAR girls, we come now to consider the latter part of the Creed in the same cursory manner in which I have been obliged to deal with the first part. We profess to believe next in the Holy Ghost, that is, the Holy Spirit. This Spirit is equal to the Father and to the Son ; co-eternal with them, holds all the essence of the Godhead just as much as the Father and the Son. In this respect there is no difference between them. The only difference—that which, in fact, makes the person of the Holy Ghost—is the way in which He holds the essence of the deity, namely, from the Father and from the Son, by a manner which we call procession, but which we do not in the least understand. We have clear Scrip-

ture proof that this is so, that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, and that He is called the Spirit of the Son, and is sent by both. The Spirit is called Holy because He is in Himself holy, and because it is His office to sanctify or make holy. We must believe also in the Holy Catholic Church; not the Roman Catholic, which is absurd, for a thing cannot be at the same time general and particular, but in the Holy Universal Church; holy because its doctrines are holy, its professions are holy. It is holy because redeemed by Christ's blood, holy because sanctified by the Holy Ghost, holy because it is the one mystical body whose place it is to be at the right hand of the Father in the eternal kingdom. The Holy Church is not like that of the Jews of old, confined to a particular people and to a special country, but is intended to embrace, and will in the end embrace, the whole world. This Church or house of God is that for which Christ died, viz., all the redeemed, and admits of great varieties, just as the leaves and branches on any large tree vary much, and yet form only one tree. So long as the different

branches hold the truth as it is in Jesus, so long as God's Word is their guide, so long as the Sacraments are duly administered in all things needful and essential to them, the outward semblance of the Church may vary from necessity or choice, and yet continue to be called and to be part of the Holy Catholic Church. In this we believe; that is to say, we feel it needful that we should belong to it; otherwise we would seem to exclude ourselves from the mystical body of Christ, and we would seem to shrink from an open profession of Christ and Christianity. We must believe also in the communion of saints. A saint is not a separatist, like the Pharisee of old, but simply set apart for the service of God, one devoted and dedicated to Christ's service; as the vessels in the temple were dedicated to God, they could not be used for common purposes. These persons thus set apart have communion and fellowship—if they are indeed the heirs of glory, by being redeemed—with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost. They have also communion and fellowship with the angels in

heaven, sent to minister to them as the heirs of salvation ; and they have still further communion with the Church of the redeemed in heaven and with the Church militant on earth. It is this which gives the Church or the individuals of the Church the wondrous power which they possess. They do not stand isolated, each man fighting his own battle, on his own ground, in his own strength. In this way they would be no match for the devil and the world and the flesh. Each stands in the midst of an army which God the Father defends and shields, which God the Son prays for and helps, and which God the Holy Ghost stimulates and invigorates. He stands side by side with men, contending earnestly with those around for the faith. He stands ministered to by the angels ; and he stands deeply encouraged by the cloud of witnesses, by those who, having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, seem looking from heaven, to beckon him on to the rest which remaineth, and to the victory won by martyrs, and apostles, and prophets. Here is indeed that for which we must be most thankful.

We must believe also in the forgiveness of sins, —a forgiveness secured by the blood of Christ once shed on Calvary for the guilt of a world. By faith we lay hold of the promise of pardon offered in the Bible, on our true repentance and deep love for the Saviour. It is a simple transaction, flowing out from the finished work of Christ. All we can do cannot atone for one guilty thought; but when the love of the dear Redeemer enters our heart, it works by faith, and faith lays hold of the promise, and so we are forgiven; then the deepened love of Him who has pardoned us makes us desire to please Him, and from that affection, gratitude, and love, there spring up within us newness of life, holiness, and deep sorrow for sin. We must believe also in the resurrection of the body, that will, in some way that we do not understand, be raised again, with all the necessary component parts which go to identify it, so that it may receive judgment as a body which has lived in time. You know, dear ones, that all of you have already changed your seeming bodies twice over since your birth. Your bodies,

although always the same, in one sense, never for one moment continue the same in their various particles. Each seven years every particle of every body has passed away, and yet the body remains in the eye of man and in the eye of God as the same body. What constitutes the identity of the body we do not know; but this makes it more easy to understand the doctrine of the resurrection. St Paul laughs at those who see any difficulty about the matter, and says that he must be a fool who expects all the old particles of the dead body to reappear in the spiritual body of the resurrection. The seed, he says, which is sown, produces a very different body from that which we put into the ground and which died, yet it sprang from it; and so also will it be in the resurrection. It was laid in the grave a natural, corruptible, weak body, but it will rise a spiritual, incorruptible, and powerful body, a fit aid to the immortal spirit of man. We can safely trust all this to God's wisdom and God's power. We cannot know sufficient to enable us to tell of what our present body consists, so

as to form its identity; in other words, what makes it differ from all other bodies. If we knew this we could form some notion of the resurrection body; but not knowing this, nor being able to guess at it, we must be content to wait until God reveals it. But oh, what a revelation it will be when our redeemed bodies, bright as the sun, or the moon, or the stars, like the body of our sinless Redeemer, shall burst from the tomb, and illuminate with exquisite light the surrounding scenes! Oh how glorious never to feel one ache, one pain, one sorrow, one sin dim the enjoyment of the spiritual being we carry with us to the throne of God! How glorious to feel the intensified power of the free immortal spirit, aided by this beauteous creation of the All-powerful One! How glorious to look upon the angel forms so bright and so beautiful, only second to our own, and inferior to what we shall be when we take a nearer place to the throne in virtue of Him who is the God-man, and claims for His kindred the nearest place to Himself in the eternal world! There is a

dark side to the bright picture. The bodies of the lost will also rise, and will carry the impress of their sins, as the bodies of the redeemed will carry the impress of their holy thoughts and desires. The bodies of the lost will carry on them doubtless the marks of their ruin and disgrace, and reveal to the astounded creation the justice of the awful God. With bodies of horror, and disgrace, and infamy, they will stand as the scathed tree and the riven rock, to indicate the vengeance of an offended God, who offered mercy, and was repulsed by His daring, ungrateful creatures. Then it will be seen indeed in what consists the body of man, remoulded and refashioned by his deeds and thoughts—deeds of sin and thoughts of evil. Even now the wicked are working out for themselves the semblance of those awful bodies, which will still be immortal and eternal and unalterable. Once more, we must believe in the life everlasting, the life of intense enjoyment in the heaven of heavens, a life held in Christ, and hid in Him; or else a life of terror and crying and woe, held with the wretched spirits

of darkness, untruth, and crime, in their awful place of eternal torment. We may not shrink from this belief. No doubt, in the coming eternity, we shall see the need of this act of divine justice. No doubt, in that vision of glory, when God unfolds His doings to man, we shall learn what weak nature now shrinks away from as something too awful to contemplate, the eternal punishment of the lost, who defied God's vengeance, and tried to drive Him from the throne, and who, if released from their place of woe, would only repeat the same daring conduct. If love will not change our nature, no harshness and no terror can possibly do so. All that could be tried has been tried, and tried in vain. The thought of this unending woe ought indeed to make us exert ourselves to the utmost, not only for ourselves, but for all we love. Euphemia, dear, I shall be glad to see you remain. I think from your face that you have something to say to me."

Euphemia Partridge, such as we have described her, had been one of the most, if not the very most, attentive of all Jane's pupils. She

had drunk in greedily all that had been said, had talked over with those who had remained what her loved teacher had said; but to-day her interest culminated to a point of extreme and marked attention. When left alone with her friend and teacher, she burst into tears and exclaimed, "Oh, Miss Holmes, I do thank you for all your instruction. You see everything so clearly, you seem to realise everything so perfectly, that it does not appear at all like the teaching one has been accustomed to,—the dry question and answer, the text of Scripture which proves this or that, and the fatigue which hangs over one when all is done. Will you tell me, kind teacher, how you yourself learned?"

Jane smiled, and said, "I learned on my knees with my Bible in my hand, but my eyes and ears were open to all I heard. I never could rest satisfied until I had fairly grappled with every difficulty which met me; I could never put it aside. And you, dear Euphemia, who are destined to teach others, and to lead them, as I hope and believe, in the right way, you will find that if you are humble in asking for information

from those who can give it to you, and if at the same time you ask God to teach you, that you will not long be left in any great difficulty. Gradually but surely your eyes will be opened; gradually but surely persons will help you more or less, some in one way, and some in another. In the end you will see as clearly as I do; yes, and perhaps a good deal more clearly; for God has not only given you good ability, but a persevering, inquiring mind, which will not rest until it is satisfied. But now, is there any question you wish to ask?"

"I was reading the other day a book which was given to me, it was written by a clergyman and a scholar; and he maintains that the Greek Church is right in saying that the Holy Ghost does not proceed from the Son, but only from the Father."

"Yes; this is an old error. The whole question has been thoroughly examined, and my own mind is perfectly satisfied that the doctrine which is held by the Church of England is the true one. Christ repeatedly speaks of the Holy Ghost as His Spirit, and as sent by Him. What

is meant really by the word 'proceeding' we cannot have any notion of; it is a form of existence, a manner of holding the Deity that we cannot with our finite minds understand. There is, as you know, but one God, one essence or substance of Deity. In order that this unity should be real when held by three persons in three different ways, it would seem almost needful to believe what we have been taught to believe. To hold, with the Greek Church, that two persons hold their beings eternally from the Father, yet have no relation to each other except what comes through the Father, would seem to interfere with the perfection of this unity, and probably would eventually lead to the rejection of the Trinity altogether. But it is a subject so deep and so mysterious that we can only hope for light from the Eternal Spirit of truth, whom Christ Himself has sent to be in His place, and to reveal to the Church the secrets which are hidden from the world. Now, dear, is there anything else?"

"You look very tired, but I hope you will forgive me if I ask you one more question.

Why do you suppose the bodies of the wicked will be different from the bodies of the redeemed?"

"Dear Euphemia, how can you ask such a question? Does not Christ say that there will be a great division and a great distinction when men shall stand before Him for judgment? One He calls goats, the other sheep,—one distinguished for meekness and gentleness, the other for qualities exactly the reverse. That Satan can for wise purposes assume now the form of an angel of light is true, but it is not his natural or permanent form. Every emotion of the mind alters the expression of the face, and the sins of men change the very forms of their bodies. The man who has some strong besetting sin bears unmistakably on his face, in his motions, and in his person, the stamp of the sin. We women can read it there when it is only commencing. Passion, lust, greed, gluttony, pride, and ambition, are often as easily read as our alphabet; and why not as easily read in the eternal as in the mortal body? Then the passions are fixed, and the doom of those whose passions are fixed is

immutable ; the flashing anger of God is there, the eye that scathes, the terror that transfixes, and the awe that changes. A second will fix a photograph ; less than a second will fix unchangeably the awful stamp of the condemned and guilty on body and face for ever. It seems to me a necessity, from the fact of there being this awful God, and these condemned earthly creatures—rebels, blasted by the terror of His power.”

“ I think I clearly understand. Thank you much for all the trouble you have taken with me.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PAINTING.

THE same evening Jane went for a drive, and spent some hours at the house of Nora Ireland, where she again met Mr Lionel de Burgh. He seemed delighted to see her, and asked particularly how she was succeeding with her Confirmation class. He begged her not to weary herself in the matter, as he intended, for his friend's sake, to enter fully into each important subject with all the candidates. Jane said her class gave her great pleasure, that she was feeling more rested, and that it would be the last effort she should make, in that direction, for some time, as she had promised her parents, when the vacation commenced, to break up her little school, and not resume it again, at all events, until she felt

perfectly able to do so. He then inquired after her paintings, requested permission to see the unfinished one, of which he had, he said, heard a good deal. Jane herself told him of her distress when her father had opened the door suddenly, and she had let the brush fall in the very front of the painting. She had not, she said, had the courage, or perhaps the strength, to look at it since.

“But what colour was on the brush?”

“Oh, white!”

“And where did it fall?”

“It fell just behind the principal figure, and destroyed a good deal of minute work, which had taken a considerable time to elaborate.”

“Ah, well,” he said, “you know what Turner has done with his patches of light. I am very fond of painting, and have taken many lessons in Italy. Now, although I hear you are a clever artist, I may possibly help you a little. At all events, will you allow me to see what I can suggest towards repairing the damage, and you must promise not to think me very conceited, but only a little kind-hearted. You know we

Irishmen are famous for taking an interest in other people besides ourselves,—so wide an interest,” and he smiled, “that we sometimes forget our own schemes, in planning for others.”

Jane thanked him heartily, and said she should be much pleased to see him after school on the following day. Although anticipating her lesson on Confirmation, we may as well tell the result of the visit at once.

Mr de Burgh called, and looked at the painting, which was one of no ordinary kind. It was in part a copy of one of Raphael's, and in part an original conception. The idea of Raphael did not bear out the scriptural doctrine which he wished to elucidate, and the attempt was made, with some considerable spirit, to remedy this. The touches were bold, and yet there was great delicacy of handling where delicacy was needed. But there lay the dash of white paint in the very forepart of the painting. Mr de Burgh sat fully half an hour pondering, still he could suggest nothing. He sat for another half hour, asking questions as to the meaning of certain points, and then all at once he seemed

to have got hold of the way out of the difficulty. He did not advise the painting in again of what had been blotted, but suggested another course. Mixing some dark crimson colours, he suggested that the robe of the principal figure should be draped differently, still leaving a good deal of the white paint where it was. Jane tried, and succeeded to a great extent. She had nearly finished her work, when again her father entered abruptly, and again her brush fell with a dab on the painting. It was too much. Her nerves had been overstrained, and she fainted. When recalled to herself, she lay perfectly still on the sofa where she found herself, until nearly six o'clock, and then asked her mother about Mr de Burgh, and whether he was greatly shocked at her want of sense in fainting, as she had done. Her father had disappeared, greatly vexed that he had been the means of twice destroying his patient and industrious daughter's work. Her mother said that Mr de Burgh had only expressed himself sorry for her weakness, and thought she had greatly overtaxed her strength. She had left him, she said, with her father,

looking at the spoiled painting. In fact Mr Holmes had poured out his sorrow into the good-natured ears of the kind clergyman, whose hands longed, but did not dare, to touch the painting which lay before him. As Mr Holmes talked and he listened, Mr de Burgh said quietly—

“If I might venture on such a liberty, I think, now that I know what your daughter’s intentions about the picture were, I could save you some sorrow, and your daughter some labour. Shall you say I am meddling if I try my hand on the painting?”

Mr Holmes looked gratefully at him. “Somehow,” he said, “I don’t think Jane will touch that painting again; it seems fated. It was intended for Mr Pemberton, whom you met here lately, and he has asked patiently after its progress, from time to time. It has been a labour of love; and also, my dear sir, I may tell you it was to have been a matter of considerable profit also. My daughter has done her very best, but her health has broken down; and now twice I have been the unhappy cause of doing the

picture injury. We do not now require the money for it so much; indeed we can, thank God, do without it. But for all that, it must distress her terribly; and if you will try what you can do to it, I will thank you."

Thus encouraged, Mr de Burgh laboured on until six o'clock, and under his rapid and skilful touches the painting seemed not only to recover its former beauty, but to increase in power and strength. After all, the amount of paint which had fallen was not very considerable. Nervousness and fatigue had made it assume larger proportions. By six o'clock the mischief was nearly obliterated. Rising from her sofa, Jane nervously went to her painting, and stood in mute amazement at the change which had been wrought. Startled, silent, scarce breathing, she looked and watched, and tears of gratitude rolled down her face. Mr de Burgh turned and laughed.

"My dear Miss Holmes," he said, "I hope I have not utterly spoiled your beautiful picture, which now carries on its face the impudence of the Irishman? If you will, in time, give it the

soft touches which it now requires (a few from your hand will suffice, I imagine, to complete the effect), then you will redeem my daring work. Pray pardon me, for attempting to rectify what my foolish curiosity in a great degree caused. I obtained your father's permission to take your brush in hand; after all, the evil is not so serious as we had anticipated."

Jane could only thank him warmly for the kindness and sympathy which had made him devote so much of his valuable time to her spoiled work.

"The painting," she said, "is greatly improved by its strange mishap, and that dash of light is just the thing that it required. The broken mirror, into which you have made it, flings back the rays of the sun with wondrous effect, giving new being to the little child that lies at the mother's feet. Oh, thank you, thank you so much for your kindness."

Mr de Burgh laughed, and said he was happy in escaping so easily. Most artists would have shown him the door, and told him he had better paint for himself. "But in your case, if I had

spoiled your work, you would be too kind to blame me. Adieu! I hope the painting may soon fly away to its destination."

A few days afterwards, when sundry last touches had been added, the painting was carefully packed up, and despatched to Mr Pemberton, who had heard with some concern the accounts of its finishing from Mr Holmes, who was full of the subject and of praise of the Irish clergyman, who was winning all hearts, filling his church to overflowing, and his school almost to suffocation. "But best of all," continued Mr Holmes, "he is as humble as a little child, only laughing at his own performances in music and painting. I never saw such a man for a clergyman; I should rejoice to see a great many more like him."

Mr Pemberton looked, as he felt, very grave. He sat down at his desk and wrote a note, which he tore up. Again he wrote another which shared a similar fate. Then he got up, walked about his office, and complained of wanting a holiday. Business, he said, would call him to Chester soon, and perhaps he could take a few

days then, when he would do himself the pleasure of calling at Mr Holmes' house ; meanwhile he begged to be remembered most kindly to Mrs Holmes, and to tender his best thanks to Miss Holmes for the painting she had sent him, which, he added, must find some worthy place as soon as possible. Did Mr Holmes think the fair artist could be induced to aid him in choosing for it a proper light, one that would best suit its design ? If so, it would add one favour more to the long list of those she had already shown him. Finally, a cheque for the amount of the commission was enclosed, and Mr Holmes returned home in a considerable state of bewilderment, to confide to his wife the strange interview he had had with his old friend.

CHAPTER XIX.

SEVENTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

AT the next meeting with her pupils Jane said,—“ One of those things which we promised through our god-parents, when admitted to baptism, was to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our life. I need not ask you whether you know these commandments; I am well aware that they have been learned, and, at all events, partially understood long since. It will, however, be needful for us at this time to consider rather more carefully what God really requires of us in these ten commandments, which are usually called the Moral Law, or the foundation of all morality. We have, first, the great divisions which we are bound to follow, of the two tables, which contain

our duty to God and our duty to our neighbour. The Church Catechism very beautifully and truly thus gives us a summary of four of these commandments—‘My duty towards God is to believe in Him, to fear Him, to love Him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength ; to worship Him, and give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, to call upon Him, to honour His holy name and His Word, and to serve Him truly all the days of my life.’ This will be quite sufficient for our consideration this morning. The First Commandment seems simple, ‘Thou shalt have none other gods but me ;’ but it is, as David says, exceeding broad. Here God not only forbids the Jews, and all others who submit themselves to His laws, to set up in their hearts or before their eyes any god but Himself ; He claims for Himself all worship, all honour, all trust, all fear, all love ; but as He is the doer of all that is done—as He is the maker and preserver of all that is made and preserved, as He is the fountain and source of all good, the author of all purity and the rewarder of all that diligently

seek Him, as well as the punisher of all that forsake Him, He claims all the service of head and heart and body from each member of the human family. If we, then, put anything whatever in His place, ourselves or our dress, or our appetite, or our affections,—if we love anything more than Him, if we seek after anything more than Him, if we trust in anything more than Him, if we fear anything more than Him, we at once break this commandment. It is indeed so wide in its bearing, and claims justly so much from us, that we are all convicted of sin daily and hourly, and can only cry out for mercy through our Lord and Saviour. The Second Commandment is also very broad, and would, if we followed it, secure for us the deep spirituality of worship which God requires from us. Man, naturally, as a fallen being, seeks to draw down God to the level of his own imagination; and as that unsanctified imagination becomes more and more degraded, so our thoughts regarding deity become lower and lower, until, with daring disregard of His laws, men who call themselves Christians are not afraid to do that which He

has so strictly forbidden. God tells us we must make no image of Him, no picture of Him. We must not bow down to it, we must not worship it. Nay, we must make no picture of anything in heaven, and earth, and sea, which is to have any portion of worship from us. All this is strictly prohibited. God is jealous. He will be thought of only as the Omnipotent One, the God of love, and power, and truth, and holiness, the great ruler, the future judge, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, a spirit of whom none can form an adequate notion, and who is to be worshipped in the heart of hearts—He will share no worship with the creatures He has made, with sun, or moon, or stars, with wind, or rain, or snow, with tree, or flower, or blossom, with animal or man, with angel or saint. Nothing, however powerful or however good, is to claim the smallest share in that worship which is due to Him, and no man must venture, even in his mind, to form any conception of what He is like. To do so is to degrade Him to the level of our corrupt and poor imagination. It is a matter of the deepest pain to see

how this commandment has been carelessly broken by the Greek Church and by the Roman Catholic Church, and how steadily the evil coming from them is spreading into our beloved Church. Take some of those paintings which are so well known—the Assumption of the Virgin Mary—we have hundreds of such pictures—and they teach the worship of the Virgin; in many of them you see the very apostles bending down to worship her. Some of them are gross to an extreme degree. There is one in the Museum of Berlin which for grossness exceeds anything I have ever seen. The Virgin is ascending to heaven; on a bench in heaven sits on one side the Father, represented as an old man; on the other side sits Christ the Son, as a half-draped figure; above is the Holy Spirit as a dove; the Father and Son are holding a crown above an empty place to which they are welcoming the ascending Mary, who is receiving the worship of men and angels. I only give you one example of the daring, awful way in which men who call themselves keepers of the ten commandments violently break them.

It is time our painting galleries became depositories of Christian truth ; it is time that what is so daringly blasphemous should be put aside from the sight of our Christian people. Representations of the Trinity in unity are far commoner than I could have believed possible. If anything more than another can call down God's vengeance on us, it is the wilful and open disregard of His laws. We wrong our own souls by daring impiety, and wrong the souls of all whom we encourage to gaze on such impiety.

The Third Commandment guards our conduct towards God in our language and outward bearing. It makes us understand that, unless we are most careful in giving Him honour with our lips when His name or any of His attributes are mentioned, we sin ; and makes us understand that in prayer, in reading and handling His Word, in church, on our knees, or wherever and however we are openly brought into contact with Him, we must remember His great majesty, and pay Him the respect which is due to Him. A daring height of impiety is sometimes reached, when men in ordinary con-

versation use His name without thought, or, still worse, when they on solemn occasions swear as a matter of course, or swear falsely. The Fourth Commandment, in order to secure the real rest of God's day, first requires real labour for six days. There is no such thing as rest, if there is not labour, and earnest labour, beforehand. The man who idles and sleeps about all day, does not and cannot sleep at night; he lies tossing about, as he deserves, during the weary hours of night. The day-labourer, who toils hard, sleeps soundly and well all the time that he can afford to give to sleep, and rises refreshed and full of life for his work in the morning. So it is with those who work for the six days of the week, to them Sunday is a real day of rest. Now, dear girls, I hope you will remember this. It happens often with young people whose parents are wealthy, that they find no real occupation during the days of the week, beyond eating, dressing, music, painting, novel-reading, croquet, and parties. This is no life for a rational being, who is bound to add to the sum of human

happiness by toil of one kind or another, and who is bound in all duty to God, to find some occupation which may bring Him glory and praise. Your real happiness consists in this—lay it to heart, without this steady object in life, existence is simply wasted. But it may be said, ‘Oh, this will soon end—we shall marry, and then we shall have enough to do. We are only playing now ; we are but children.’ It is a bad preparation for married life to do nothing but play. It is the worst preparation for training children of your own, to be unable to train yourselves. No ; depend upon it, dear pupils, that when you leave me, and leave lessons, which are now your occupation and your labour, your happiness lies in finding some useful employment which will enable you to combine service to God and service to man—an occupation, too, which will tire you, and from which you will be glad to rest. Idleness brings with it extravagance and a curse, and therefore God has strictly prohibited it. On the seventh day, the Lord’s Day, the day on which God originally rested, as Bishop Ussher

has shown, and the day on which Christ rose, we rest from all ordinary work, and give ourselves and our households rest for the cultivation of piety and devotion in ourselves and others. On this day God's house is our house, and the Sunday-school our rest. On this day the Bible is our book, and God's works the commentary upon it. On this day our thoughts travel out to God's providence and our past life, and deepen our piety and trust. It is a day of delicious work-rest—sacred work and sacred rest—which God has especially blessed, and which seems more and more to fit us for the eternal work-rest above, the Sabbath of full and perfect enjoyment in God's eternal kingdom, spent in delicious work for God, and in the rest that He gives His workers, whose highest delight and rest are in obedience to Him. Soul and body then know no fatigue and no exhaustion; their every movement is delight and joy increasing along the endless tract of expanding happiness and knowledge. Nora, dear, I shall be glad to have you remain to-day."

Accordingly Nora Ireland remained, her joyous temperament and her giddy mind sobered by the truthful teaching she had so greedily received. Her deeply affectionate nature showed itself at once when the other pupils had retired. Her arms were round Jane's neck in an instant, and her kisses were on her lips.

"Oh, Miss Holmes," she said, "my darling teacher! what shall I do? what shall I do? If you are right—and I know you are—my whole life has been altogether wrong, and every feeling of my mind has been wrong also. I have broken the First Commandment, and the Second, and the Third, and the Fourth, one worse than the other; and I am always breaking them; and what is worst of all, I don't see my way not to break them. You know how giddy I am, and how little I think about Church and my Bible; I fling it about, and I flop down on my knees, and I have no respect for anything holy, and I don't do anything but amuse myself, except to learn my lessons; and indeed, indeed, dear Miss Holmes, I am afraid I shall never do any good. As to

being such a Christian as you describe, it is absolutely out of my reach. Oh dear, oh dear, what shall I do?"

Jane soothed and comforted the excited child. She told her that no one could keep God's law as it ought to be kept; and that that was the reason why God sent His Son to keep His holy law for man, because it was so holy and so perfect that none but a perfect being like Christ could hope to fulfil it. "We are not then hoping for heaven because we keep God's law, my dear child, but because Christ has kept it for us, and borne the penalty of our disobedience to it in death. You want to be good, and holy, and pure, and to keep, so far as you can, God's perfect law. You have a loving, affectionate, warm heart; let all that warm affection centre in your Lord, to whom you owe everything, and in order to please Him, bend all the energies of your mind and body to serve Him. This will be great happiness to you, and give Him pleasure. You will then know that He loves you, and smiles on you. The Holy Ghost the Comforter will help you, little by little, day

by day, hour by hour. Just as you want His help, He will come and stand by you. Your heart will love more fully, your mind will feel more peaceful, your energies, great as they are, will be redoubled, and your enjoyments will be multiplied also. You will have deep sorrow when you have done wrong, when your giddiness betrays you, and your want of respect makes you wound Christ and man, and when you are idle, and careless; but all this will pass away, more and more, and my loving, warm-hearted Irish girl will be the light and the joy of her home and her friends."

"Dear Miss Holmes, you knock me down and pick me up again just as you like. I was trembling with despair a moment ago, and now I am trembling with joy. Which is right?"

"Both are right. The law is our school-master—a hard and severe one too—to lead us to the gentle, loving, tender Jesus, our joy, our hope, our rejoicing. Don't you see, Nora dear?"

"Yes, I do see, and thank you with my warmest thanks."

Jane had to keep the excited child beside her talking to her, and telling her the same thing over and over again, in other forms and shapes, for more than an hour, until she became perfectly quiet and calm, and left with a grateful heart, to follow out in life what she had now for the first time fully understood and appreciated.

CHAPTER XX.

MR PEMBERTON.

“WELL, Jane,” said Mr Holmes as she entered the drawing-room that evening, looking, as she often did now, most bright and cheery, “I have undertaken a task which I am not quite sure you will like. Mr Pemberton has begged me to get you to promise that, by and by, when your painting is framed, you will go with me and show him the best place for it to hang in, so as to secure the best light for it; and of course he thinks no one can choose so well as the fair artist herself. What say you?”

“If you wish me to go I will accompany you, dear father, certainly, and give what advice I can. We owe Mr Pemberton too much to refuse such a small request; it is but a little matter

he asks. But I am afraid I cannot well spare the time for so much pleasure for the next three weeks to come at any rate."

"Well, I suppose it will be quite three weeks before the frame is ready. It is to be a handsome one, I know; but Mr Pemberton said he should have occasion to be in Chester in the course of a few days, and would call. He will then most probably consult you himself as to the most convenient time for a visit to his house."

Jane felt that she blushed as her father said this, but only laughingly replied, "I don't think Mr Pemberton can have anything to say to me, unless, indeed, it may be to find fault with my painting." She then took her old place on the little stool at her mother's feet, and laid her head on her knee, looking, as she felt, very happy in being there.

"Well, mother, and what have you to tell me to-night?"

"I want to have a little talk with you, love. I seldom see you now that you are so busy. What with lessons and drives, and being occu-

pied all day long, and evenings seldom at leisure, I scarcely ever have a word with you. Do you know I have a great mind to try extravagance again, in order to gain your whole attention once more."

Jane gave one hasty glance, and then, as if perfectly satisfied, laid her head down again, and taking her mother's hand in hers, and playing with the rings on it, she said, "You don't know what rest there is in being loved as you love me, mother, dear. Idling thus is very charming, but I cannot always indulge in this way, you know."

"Idle, my dear child, idle! No one but yourself would for one moment accuse you of idleness. It gives both your father and me real pleasure to see you rest as you are now doing, if it be but for a short time. So now, in case you should feel as if you were utterly wasting precious time, you may go and give us some music. Choose for yourself, darling, and whatever you select will be sure to please and refresh us. I often think that musicians like yourself can scarcely understand the amount of pleasure they are able to give to others."

Jane immediately acceded to her mother's request, and remained for some time seated at the piano, rendering full justice to the several pieces she had taken from her portfolio. Suddenly she became aware of the presence of a third person, and rising hastily, turned to encounter the delighted gaze of Mr Pemberton, who, greeting her warmly, said, "I have to thank you for a real treat, Miss Holmes. I had no idea that you were such an accomplished musician. Artist, musician—what next, fair lady, may I reckon amongst your charms?"

"Jane is too modest to sing her own praises," said Mrs Holmes; "but I assure you, my dear sir, that those who know her best, have the most cause to appreciate and value her for her true worth."

Jane, thinking her mother had spoken too warmly, hastened to add laughingly,

"Oh, Mr Pemberton, pray make due allowance for a mother's partiality. I am, you must remember, her only bird, doing, as a matter of course, all things well. Even my dear father, there, is a most lenient judge. It would have

been impossible for me not to play well with the first-rate instruction I have received in music. And I must confess, it affords me at times an almost selfish pleasure. Music has a wonderful power in calming the troubled spirit, has it not?"

"I hope you do not mean to insinuate that your spirit is wont to be troubled, dear Miss Holmes, for that would indeed be a hard matter to give credence to. Overworked I know you have been, so allow me to bring forward the subject I wished to discuss this evening, namely, exercise on horseback. I know you ride, and are fond of it; and just at present it so happens that I have a pretty creature in the stable absolutely idle, seeing she will not consent to carry anything less precious than a lady. My groom is quite concerned, and wishes me either to find some lady willing to mount her, or else to part with her; and it struck me that if I could persuade you to make use of her, it would prevent the necessity of parting with a valuable mare, and insure the creature's having regular daily exercise. I should be sorry to trust

my favourite to the hands of a stranger ; so, with your permission, I will send the groom with her, in a few days, to stables in Chester, and also a horse for your use, my dear sir, that you may see that Miss Holmes and the Lady Georgiana become mutually acquainted."

Jane was surprised beyond measure, and Mr Holmes hastened to tender grateful thanks, but, at the same time, said he greatly feared that such an arrangement would cause considerable inconvenience to his kind friend.

"Far from it, I assure you. And now that I think of it, I may as well send two horses. The groom can then be always at hand ; and if I may add a request, it will be that I might take his place occasionally, and judge for myself as to the powers of this far-famed mare. I sincerely trust," he added, looking at Jane, "that your evening rides may bring back the bloom to your cheek and your wonted gaiety of spirits."

Mr Pemberton's colour slightly deepened as he made this last proposition, and Jane felt confused, but only replied, "You are indeed very good ; I

cannot thank you as I ought ; I feel ashamed at so much kindness being shown to me. Papa must make a pretty speech for me. But what will become of me should any accident happen to the mare ?”

“So that the fair rider escape unhurt, I care not,” he said. “But I must now hasten for my train. Accept my thanks for having received my plan so kindly, and consider me as sincerely obliged.” So saying, he raised her hand to his lips, and was gone.

Father, mother, and daughter sat long that evening before retiring for the night.

CHAPTER XXI.

EIGHTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

THE next morning Jane met her pupils with a happy smile; they would have chatted merrily might they have done so, but she drew them round her at once, reminding them of their subject by saying, We have to-day come to the last six Commandments of the Moral Law, which the Church Catechism has summed up in this way, 'My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me; to love, honour, and succour my father and mother; to honour and obey the Queen, and all that are put in authority under her; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters; to hurt nobody by word and

deed; to be true and just in all my dealings; to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart; to keep my hands from picking and stealing; and my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering; to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity; not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.' This epitome was intended to be committed to memory, and therefore could not conveniently be made longer. As it is, young people find it rather difficult to remember. It, however, really only glances at some of the varied, deep, and comprehensive lessons which are taught us here. Volumes are filled with explanations of these six Commandments. It is not my wish to enlarge, but rather to explain, in as short a space as I can, what seems most important.

"The Fifth Commandment places some in the position of the representatives of God's authority on earth. The father and mother have a direct authority given to them by God

over their children, and they exercise that authority in His name, being bound hereafter to give Him an exact account of what they have done in the care of each child. They are bound to exercise the authority given them so as to glorify Him, and lead their children heavenwards. The Queen has the same position given to her in reference to England at large, and she is bound to exercise her vast power for the furtherance of true religion and piety, or to give an account hereafter of not having done so. Those who represent her authority, and those again who represent the authority of parents, as I am doing at this moment, are bound to use their heaven-given authority in the same way as the Queen or the parent. This being the case, all who fall under that authority are bound to yield to it the fullest respect and obedience. The only limit to that respect and obedience lies in our duty to God and man. We may not, to please any one, or to show our respect to any one, disobey God or injure man by thought, word, or deed. But within this limit—that is, whenever we

are asked to do anything which is not wrong in itself—we are bound to obedience; and we are always bound to respect; for in showing respect to the authority God has given, we are really and truly showing respect to God Himself. This Commandment has an immense breadth, and is one exceedingly difficult to keep, especially when the parents and those in authority are in themselves irreligious and unreasonable. Nevertheless we are bound to do what God requires. Our duty is plain, although it may be difficult.

“The Sixth Commandment is explained to its fullest extent by a few simple words—‘He that hateth his brother is a murderer.’ God’s law requires us to love our neighbours as ourselves. Whenever there steals into our hearts envy, malice, variance, wrath, strife, or any other evil passion which disturbs our love to man, and makes us feel angry with him, so that we could do him harm if the opportunity offered, or if we could safely indulge our bad temper, then we have broken this Commandment. The passionate girl as much as the

over their children, and they ^{his} blood, is authority in His name, being ^{his} spiteful word to give Him an exact account as the sharp have done in the care ^{of} it. The biting are bound to exercise ^{the} lip of the delicate so as to glorify His ^{the} hand of the garotter, heavenwards. The ^{is} at defiance. The tion given to ^{the} beautiful woman directed large, and she ^{is} as much as the deadly revolver, power for ^{the} heart of deadly enmity. It is an piety, or ^{is} to think how constantly this Com- having ^{is} broken and utterly disregarded. autho ^{that} hateth his brother is indeed a murderer aut^{heart}.

^{by} The Seventh Commandment is shown also ^{the} our Lord and Master, to have reference to ^{of} the thoughts of the heart as much as the deeds ^{its} of the body, and there is no protection against ^{is} breach except in the extreme purity which ^{is} produced by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God. Our whole nature is corrupt and sinful, and the corruption shows itself in a thousand forms little suspected by us. The mere habit of eating and drinking, not

glory of God, but to please ourselves, and within our breasts natural pleasures, which of course are evil in themselves, invariably leads to constant transgression of God's holy law. Sodom, which was a city of unutterable horror, began with revelry and the dance. The streets of Jerusalem were filled with transgressors of this law from fulness of bread and idleness. 'This kind going not out but by prayer and fasting.' We cannot be too simple in our way of living. Exercise of body and simplicity of food take away from us many snares that continually beset those who are careless in these matters. But again, our dress, or, shall I say, sometimes our absurd undress, leads perpetually to a breach of this holy commandment in thought, word, and often deed. Women, especially, cannot be too careful in this matter. The dress should show the purity of the mind; it should exhibit the fit decoration for the temple of God; our bodies are the temple of the indwelling God. It will guide us sufficiently to think that all ornaments, all decoration, all that we

spend so much time and thought and labour upon, ought to be of the simplest and purest character, worthy of the look and approval of Jesus Himself. If we cannot take Him to our toilet, we are open to sin. Then, again, books and pictures—Oh, what sin lies in these! We read novels—well, if they are good, what harm? none certainly, if they are good; but is it good when the plot of the whole story turns on sin, and when that which amuses most is the daring violation of God's law? When that which pleases most is the equivocal expression which suggests something impure and sinful? and when you cannot trace in the volume any one thing which makes you love God or man more than before? Such works lead constantly to a breach of the Seventh Commandment, inasmuch as they absolutely create ideas of impurity, and lay the soul open to the fearful assaults of evil. And then, what shall I say of pictures? There are exquisite pictures of all that is good, and holy, and pure, and peaceful, let us love them, and prize them; but there are mixed up with them in every gallery in England and the Continent, pictures

of sin and the grossest immorality, pictures suggestive of crime, and enticing to crime, pictures which no modest woman should look at for one second. The same may be said of statuary, which, so far as it exhibits the noble frame of man, is good, and need not be anything but absolutely pure ; but in some, yes, in many cases, it has been prostituted to the vilest uses, and leads directly, naturally, and necessarily to a disregard of that holiness without which no man shall see God. We are in great danger in this respect. Let me warn you, my dear girls, to keep your eyes guarded when you think of the extreme purity of the God who sees your every thought ; your happiness and usefulness in life depend to a very great extent on the purity of your mind. You turn aside with disgust from the leprous body, the leprous mind is infinitely worse, and far more revolting in the sight of the pure and holy God. But I must hasten on to say, that when God gives you husbands, as I trust He may some day, when you are fit to become wives, try to see in them all that is good, and kind, and gentle ; and what you do

not find there, try to make for your own sakes, and for the sake of all that God gives you to love. Reverence and love with devoted affection one who ought to be dearer to you than yourself, for indeed he is the head of the wife, and ought to be loved as such. Let your affections never stray from him for one moment ; in this lies your happiness.

“ The Eighth Commandment enforces on us the duty of honest labour and independent support, and cuts the ground from under the feet of any one who attempts to live without exertion, and by means not perfectly straightforward and truthful. ‘Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth.’ This sentence throws a powerful light upon dishonesty. The sturdy beggar is a thief, and the weak and pusillanimous, who will not help themselves, but whine and cry till others give them, are alike stealing from the general stock of labour which God has seen fit to impose on mankind. There is far more stealing in this world than one wots of. It is

not confined to the open robber, or the secret plunderer, or the servant who takes your dresses, or gives away your meat, to the gardener who sells your flowers and vegetables, or the labourer who cheats you of your time, to the indolent steward who sees his master robbed, or the reckless washerwoman or laundress who ruins your clothes to save herself trouble. It is not confined to the man who praises his own goods, and laughs at you for believing him, or undervalues yours, and calls you a fool, for parting with your property so cheaply. It is not confined to the shopkeeper who charges exorbitant prices, and adulterates his stores and gives you short measure or spurious articles. It is not confined to the gambler, and the cheat, and the swindler; but it extends itself far and wide into all the ramifications of society; so that he may fairly be called a thief who, in any way and from any motive whatever, abuses your trust, and treats you differently from what he knows to be the way in which he himself would desire to be treated. The indolent girl and the wasteful boy, weighed by the scales of divine justice, would not escape

censure at the hands of the Eighth Commandment. The waster and the thief are very closely akin. Oh, how different would society at large be if this Commandment were observed! There would be no debt, for none would buy what they could not pay for; and there would be no crash of companies with fortunes swept away in a day, for there would be an absence of the knaves who form schemes to catch fools. Our neighbours' property would be as sacred in our eyes as our own. Simplicity, industry, and honesty, with perfect truth, and open dealing, would elevate and enormously enrich our land. But I may not follow out the Commandment to its full extent. I have probably said enough to make you understand that its meaning goes far beyond what is generally supposed.

“The Ninth Commandment makes our neighbour's reputation as dear to us as our own; so that we may not by a quick glance, by a motion of the finger, by a nod, by mere silence, or by any word of assent, however short, lead men to suppose evil of our neighbour. The tongue is an unruly member, and man delights in what

lowers his neighbour so as to exalt himself. Scandal is always welcome to the unregenerate and unrenewed man, so that a great temptation lies before us all here. There is no way so easy to avenge ourselves as by speaking an unkind and injurious word; there is no action so cowardly or disgraceful as to impose on the truthfulness of another nature by the utterance or insinuation of falsehood. 'Every liar shall have his portion in the lake that burneth with fire;' justly so, for he is destitute of the truth which renders him like his God. 'Ye are of your father the devil; he was a liar from the beginning,' says our Lord; and if there is one sin more than another which we should hate, it is that sin which brought to ruin, and disgrace, and death, our first parents, and with them the whole human family. 'Truth in the inward parts,' is what David prays for; and he who has it will never be guilty of the meanness of untruth. Weak people often try to hide their faults by untruth, and by shifting the blame on another. Our words, which are all registered, and all remembered,—our words, by which we

shall be justified, and by which we shall be condemned, ought all to be spoken as in the immediate presence of the all-seeing and all-discerning God. The worst lies are those which have in them what seems the truth, almost the whole truth; they are most deadly, and have often destroyed not only the peace and the property of thousands, but have taken away life itself, and that many times. Oh, the scenes of horror and remorse which have filled the deaths of liars, the vengeance which has fallen on those who at first were guilty of only what they called 'white lies!' It is dangerous work. When any one loses or sacrifices truth, it is time that he should be hunted from society like a wild animal. By lies our Lord was hunted to death; lies nailed Him to the tree; lies caused His flesh to be torn by the scourge, and His forehead to be punctured by the thorn; lies drove the spear into His side, and made the mad crowd call down vengeance on His head, and their own heads. He does not forget it, and neither should you.

“And now we come to the last commandment, which is often termed the guard of all the

others. It teaches contentment—contentment with what God gives. Not idle contentment : not the contentment of the careless and indifferent, but contentment after labour, and toil, and energy—a recognising of the fact that God knows far better than we know what is good for us and what is bad. It is the aspiring to something which we have not, and which God has denied us, that brings with it all the sorrow and misery of more than half the world. People want to put a good face on things, aye ; that is to say, they want to appear better and richer than they are ; and hence the aying and contrivance, and all the mean shifts and meanness of struggling beings, who are only laughed at ruthlessly when their stupid folly is detected. We covet a position not our own ; we covet wealth which we have not got ; we covet our neighbour's property, or possessions of one kind or another, and then rush to deceit, fraud, lying, and a thousand sins to help us in our unholy desires. 'The devil always helps those that wish to serve him, says an old writer. No doubt he does ; but it is out of his own armoury, and the help plunges

them down deeper and deeper into eternal ruin. If we would only think what we really deserve, and then compare it with what God has given us, we should not only be content, but deeply grateful. So it is by looking at God's kindness in Christ Jesus, at His kindness to us in the ordinary affairs of life, that we shall learn this gratitude, and learn that contentment which shall make us satisfied, and more than satisfied, with all that His providence has bestowed. If you will only think, dear girls, how many of your sins and mistakes have arisen from discontent, and dissatisfaction with God's arrangements, and in fighting against what He has ordained for you, I believe you will for the future earnestly pray for grace to enable you to see that He doeth all things well, whether He gives or whether He withholds.

“Jessie, dear, it is your day. Our lesson has been a long one, but you are one of the most patient amongst us, and can therefore bear a little additional strain.”

Jessie Macpherson remained as she was permitted to do. She looked more than usually

shy, and more than usually awkward ; her lips were compressed, and her whole being seemed cold to an extreme degree.

“Jessie, dear, what is the matter? you do not look happy to-day. Can I help you in any way?”

“I don’t know, Miss Holmes; I don’t think so.”

“And why not, Jessie?”

“Oh, because I used to be quite differently taught in Scotland.”

“We are not Scotch here, you know, dear, so we teach as English people do; but Scotch people use their Bibles as much as English ones, do they not?”

“Yes, of course; but then, you see, Miss Holmes, they look at things very differently. They give you the reason for everything; and besides, I do not see the necessity of being confirmed at all. I had no godparents to promise all sorts of things for me, and I never learnt the Church Catechism. I like all you have taught us very much, and I think that I like the Church of England quite as much as

our own Church at home ; but if, before joining myself to it and becoming a communicant, I must of necessity be confirmed by the Bishop, I think I would rather reconsider the matter, and write to mamma about it, if by doing so I should not vex you, dear Miss Holmes, for that I could not bear to do. But if I have your permission to do this, and still be one of the children of your class, I shall be greatly obliged."

For a moment or two, Jane felt keen disappointment, then, drawing Jessie close to her, she put her arms round her, and kissed her fondly, saying, "As you will, dear child, write to your mother, tell her of all your doubts and difficulties, ask her counsel, and may God guide you into all wisdom, keeping you in His own truth, in whichever Church you remain."

Jessie thanked her kind friend with a full heart, and left her, feeling happier than she had done for long, as the thought of the approaching Confirmation had been weighing heavily on her mind, and she had not liked to open the subject to Miss Holmes till it should come to her turn to do so.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR DE BURGH.

THE horses arrived early the following morning, and were in good order for a ride. That same evening, punctual to the appointed hour, they came to the door, and Jane had the pleasure of being once more mounted. This had not been the case since her father's failure and her own heavy work had commenced. She was now free from all immediate anxiety ; the holidays were drawing on ; her Confirmation lessons were coming to a close ; her pupils, one by one, had shown signs of improvement, and were each, more or less, in their own peculiar way, influenced for good ; kindness was showered upon her, and her heart was light, and she did not fail to lift it up in deep gratitude to the Author and

Giver of all good things. Her father was beside her, placing her in the saddle, and arranging her habit. He was prepared to enjoy his ride quite as much as she was. The day had been a lovely one, and the evening was no less so. Everything around lent a charm to the already happy thoughts that flowed from grateful hearts. For two hours the charm continued with full strength, and with blooming cheeks and bright eyes, Jane arrived at her own door again, there to find her mother and Mr De Burgh awaiting her. Her Irish friend at once came forward to assist her in dismounting, and at the same time said, "I have only to discover that Miss Holmes can row a boat and steer a yacht, to pronounce her a proficient in all things. When, may I ask, Miss Holmes, did you learn to ride? I had no idea that you were an equestrian."

"Oh, my earliest recollections are of a pony, which was my dearest pet till I became the happy possessor of a horse; but when you speak of rowing a boat and steering a yacht, you have indeed found out my deficiencies; and I confess what little opportunity I may have had of

acquiring such knowledge I have not cared to improve."

"Permit me to say, lady, that I consider you quite at fault; and if you will allow me, I shall have great pleasure in perfecting your education in this respect during the coming summer. My yacht is a fine one; and I think, with your father and mother, we could form a pleasant party in it, taking a sail over to Ireland, or even to the Isle of Man, should you think fit."

"Oh, thanks, many thanks. I am sure our friends are all exceedingly kind, but we shall have time enough before us to discuss this scheme. What say you, mother?"

"Well, dear, I say that nothing could persuade me to venture on such a trip. I am afraid I love myself too well, and the bright sea too little by far, to entertain such a project for a moment."

Mr De Burgh laughed, and seeing the groom leading off the horses, asked whether he might not be allowed to act the groom sometimes, and accompany Miss Holmes in her rides?

"Unfortunately, my dear sir, I have no

power to accede to your request, the horses being the property of our kind friend Mr Pemberton ; but his permission might be easily obtained, I should imagine."

"I scarcely like to prefer my last petition, finding you such an impracticable young lady to-day," said Mr De Burgh, laughing, and following Jane into the cottage; "but I came to ask you to do me the honour of sitting for your likeness, Miss Holmes. Not that I am vain enough to think I could render justice to the original; but at any rate, I might be able to give pleasure to your father and mother by the attempt."

Mrs Holmes gratefully accepted the offer, in spite of her daughter's warning look, and Mr De Burgh took his leave, feeling only half satisfied with the result of his visit.

When Jane took her place at her mother's knee that evening, she said, "I fear, dear mother, you have not acted very wisely in promising Mr De Burgh that he should have sittings from me; but of course I yield to your judgment in the matter. It is surprising indeed

what kindness we have received in our time of poverty. God seems to have raised up friends to us on all sides, and I can only thank Him, and wonder at His goodness, acknowledging how utterly unworthy I am of it all. When I go to my room sometimes at night, and sit with my Bible in my hands, and think of all that I have done which I ought not to have done, and all that I have not done that I should have done, I can scarcely find courage to come near and ask God for a blessing. We have had so many opportunities of doing good—far more than most people—and I have been so full of study, so full of painting, so full of music, and so full of self, that my life seems one great sin, one long act of disobedience. O mother, dear! when I am teaching my dear pupils what they ought to do, the thought flies back upon me—‘Have you done it?’ I feel so ashamed that I often think they must read my very thoughts. But if they do not, God does. He knows how grieved I am, how guilty I feel, and how unworthy of all His love.”

“Well, Janie, dear, if your life has been wasted, what has mine been? and if you are unworthy of our present comforts, what am I, who have wasted so much on myself?”

Jane did not answer. Mother and daughter remained silent and thoughtful for some considerable time. God's Spirit was deepening His own work.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NINTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

JANE'S class were ready seated when she entered her small schoolroom on the following week, so she at once commenced, saying, "Dear girls, we have now examined into all that has been promised in the name of those who were baptized. We are, I think, next reminded in the Catechism, that we have no strength and no power to do what has been required as a matter of duty and obligation, but that we can seek for and obtain that strength that is needed, and that power which is all-sufficient, by prayer. We have also given to us a brief and comprehensive prayer or model of prayer by our Lord Jesus Christ, which you know as the Lord's prayer. It will be well for us, before going further, to examine this rather carefully. It is

very often misunderstood, and is very seldom understood in its fulness. 'Our Father!' Who speaks? Christ. Thus He takes us by the hand and leads us to His Father's throne. We dare not go there without Him. 'My Father, and your Father.' Oh, remember, when saying this prayer, that Christ is pleading for us, and that we are pleading in His name. Some are foolish enough not to use the prayer because Christ's name is not in it. Nay, but Christ's name is in the very first word. But it is no selfish prayer; we join with the whole Church of God in our petition. We do not say, 'My Father,' but 'Our Father;' otherwise we should break that holy communion which helps us so much, and break the second table of the Commandments, which teaches us to love our neighbour as ourself. I have already given you the reasons why God is our Father, and need not here repeat them. 'Which art in heaven!' 'Remember,' says the wise man, 'when thou prayest, that God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.' He sits in divine majesty and power, surrounded by holy

beings far beyond our highest thoughts. But where is heaven? Many have disputed whether there is any local heaven; but I feel there must be, because Christ is there, and Christ, though wearing a spiritual body, wears a human body, and must in His human nature be confined to one place at a time. With the swiftness of light or thought He may, doubtless, remove where He will, but still He cannot, like a Spirit, be everywhere at once. His Godhead is everywhere, His human nature cannot be, or else it is no human nature, or human nature has perished. But not so, thank God. It is there, and will be there for ever. He will always be the God-man. Where, then, is heaven? I don't think that this is difficult to answer. There may be many heavens, and doubtless there are; but the heaven of heavens must be in the centre of all creation; it must be that point around which all suns and systems revolve. Where that is, who can tell? Our solar system revolves, doubtless, round another and larger one, and that again round a third, and that third round a fourth. Where all this ends, who can

imagine? Enough for us to know that where Christ sits is the very centre of all the vast creation of the Infinite One. His Godhead links the universe to Him, and on His Father's throne He waits till all enemies are put under His feet. 'Hallowed be Thy name!' May all that by which Thou art known, Thy Bible, Thy power, Thy love, Thy truth, Thy wisdom, Thy goodness, Thy justice, and all Thy names, be to men, and especially to Thy Church, sacred and holy. May the place where Thou art worshipped be sacred, and those who proclaim Thy name be clothed with righteousness. All that touches Thee in any way or in any form, may it be to us hallowed. May we not kneel without reverence; may we not pray without devotion; may we fire one another with holy zeal in Thy house; may we sustain those who would live to glorify Thy name. 'Thy kingdom come!' Thy kingdom! and is it not here already? Nominally, yes; in the shape of two hundred millions of baptized persons; but oh, how few of these are real and true subjects! And how many millions are outside the nominal Church.

At least eight hundred millions of human beings, dying daily by thousands upon thousands in darkness and in the shadow of death, without God and without Christ. O God! may Thy kingdom come into the hearts of all that are nominally Thine, into their lives, into their thoughts, into their actions, that they may go forth a mighty army, conquering and to conquer the world, and to subdue it to Thee. If each would convert some, and all that are nominal Christians were real living members of Christ, one year might see the world sitting at the feet of the Redeemer. Hasten the time when there shall be life from the dead, when Thou shalt call Thine own people to the long-delayed work. Hasten the time when the Head of the Church shall ride on because of truth, of righteousness, and of judgment—when His right hand shall teach Him terrible things. Hasten the time when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Come, Lord, come quickly, 'Thy kingdom come.' We need, dear girls, to be ourselves living to Christ, and that closely, before we can pray for this. 'Thy will be done on earth, as

it is in heaven !' How do the angels fulfil God's will? I should say, *all of them, always, completely, joyfully, and as their highest delight, do all God's will.* We are a long way off from this, a long way off from the obedience of heaven. Let us test ourselves day by day when we pray for this sort of obedience. Here ends the portion of the prayer which reminds us first of our duty to God. Before we ask for ourselves we ask for God. True, it will make us happy ; but first we ask for Him—'Hallowed be Thy name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done.'

"After we have prayed for God's glory, we are directed to our own needs. 'Give us this day our daily bread !' 'Give us,' not 'Give me.' Again this rule : Man liveth not unto himself ; the love of his neighbour must rule his heart even in daily wants. 'Give.' It is God that gives, not man that supplies his own need. We come to God for health, for strength, for wisdom, for skill, for providential guiding, for sun-light and heat, for rain-drops and shadows, for the dew and the moist heat, for the absence of blight and pestilence, for the presence of

blessing and abundance. 'Give us this day,' not to-morrow, not for life. To-day; a short time to ask for, but enough for dying men. If the prayer be offered each day, it will suffice for the longest life. To-morrow has not come; it may never come. If it comes, our wants may all be changed, oh, how much! Who can tell what one day may bring forth? The wants of to-day cannot be the wants of to-morrow. 'Our daily bread!' Bread for the soul, bread for the body; all that will keep the soul strong and in health, and that will nourish and sustain the body for its special service to God and to man. Oh, what a large petition! Some say they cannot use the prayer because the Holy Ghost is not mentioned in it. This is a great mistake. In praying for daily bread we pray for Him and all His holy and abiding influences. Can our souls live without Him? No. Therefore we pray for Him and for all the means of grace. We pray for the understanding of the Word, for the comforting companionship of the good; in fact, for whatever is needful for the soul's full life. How we vary from day to day! how we

change from year to year! The child grows and becomes a woman, the woman becomes a wife, the wife becomes a mother; children are multiplied, and cause anxiety, and sorrow, and joy; and still the same prayer ascends. 'Daily bread' when life is expanding; 'daily bread' when our joys are full; 'daily bread' at the couch of sickness, and when the sick one is passing home to the rest above; 'daily bread' when the child is married, and leaves home amidst sobbing, rejoicing, trembling hearts. 'Daily bread!' oh how sweet the daily supply for the daily need! But the body wants also; it is a sore pinch sometimes, and little mouths open for food, and there is but little for them. Others cry for help, and there seems to be none; others for education, where is it to come from? 'Daily bread!' yes, it comes; it comes from Him who feeds the sparrows and clothes the lilies; it comes from the loving hands of Him who multiplied bread to the multitudes, from Him who added the little fish to the meal; from Him who on a proper occasion turned water into wine. It comes, this 'daily bread.' Not the

bread of idleness, but the bread sought for in the early morning, and found by the diligent seeker. 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us!' Christ joined us in this prayer when He was still carrying the load of our sin, and on earth offered it to the Father, identifying Himself with us; nor did He in the hour of death and agony forget to pray for His murderers. And still, in some minor sense, He may be said, as our Representative, and our Head, and Elder Brother in heaven, to offer up the same prayer. Even though all sin has been pardoned and washed away, the temporal punishment of sin has not ceased in His Church; and in that sense He may still pray for His mystical body, even now. Besides which, that mystical body, the Church, in the eyes of the world, bears sin—ay, much sin—and that sin seems to lie on Him whose body it is. And He is not only the Head, but the Husband of the Church, and is anxious to present it unto His Father as a Bride not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but altogether holy and pure, clear as the moon

in her shining, white as the lily, and fragrant as the rose of Sharon. In a modified sense He may still join in, and urge our prayer in virtue of His union with us. Does not this add strength to our faith, and force to our prayer as we cry for pardon, and the sealing of that pardon to our souls by the indwelling Spirit? Does it not give us bright hope and delicious joy? for nothing that can be done to give us peace is omitted by our great High Priest who still wears our nature. 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us!' I need not tell you, dear girls, that no one with an unforgiving spirit need hope for either pardon or peace. If we have once felt how kind God has been to us in taking away the load of our sins, and setting us free from guilt, we cannot find it in our hearts to refuse pardon to our worst enemy. Men are very trying in their unreasonable hatreds, dislikes, annoyances, and persecutions; but what have we been? If God has pardoned us, we cannot but forgive all others. Christ has always subdued His enemies by love. Such gentle appeals as

Paul received have ever come from Him. 'Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou me?' And thus also should we do, heaping coals of fire on the heads of those who would injure us, by doing to them acts of kindness, and mercy, and love, overcoming evil with good.

“‘Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!’ God tempteth no man so as to cause him to sin, but He allows trial to come upon us for our own good, and for the good of His Church, as He allowed Job to be tempted, and David, and Peter, and thousands of those He loves most dearly. Our prayer, then, means, suffer us not to be tempted or tried beyond our power of bearing temptation; stand beside us in our sorrow and need; and as Thou didst cause Thy Son to triumph in His temptation by the evil one, so cause us also to triumph in Thy strength and in Thy might. We stand in the midst of enemies, we stand ever fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Our foes are powerful, and our strength is very weakness, only by Thy help may we hope to conquer; only in Thy strength can we expect to triumph

Oh, Thou Mighty One! come near to us, undertake for us. Give us the weapons of the fight; supply us from Thine own armoury; fasten the defensive armour round us; nerve our hands to wield the weapon of attack; and make us more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. 'Deliver us from evil!' from sin, and sorrow, and eternal death; from all that would hurt the soul and the body; from all that would make our enemies triumph over us. Thou hast all power, and Thou hast all the inclination to use it for our sakes. Thine indeed, O God, is the kingdom, Thine is the power, and Thine is the glory, for ever and ever. Amen. So be it. Now, dear girls, our lesson has been a very long one to-day. Each of you in turn has come to me, and I know pretty well what you each feel, and can therefore better speak to you. I shall not ask any one to remain to-day; but of course I am always ready to answer any question that you may choose to put to me. We shall not have our next lecture, which will probably be the last, before Monday next.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RIDE.

JANE has gone for a ride in which Mr Pemberton has joined her; he praises the paces of the gentle mare, and Jane's skill in managing her. They have gone some distance into the country, enjoying the freshness of the air and the beauty of the scenery, when Mr Pemberton, turning to Mr Holmes, said,

“I most sincerely congratulate you on the way in which Mr Hopkins has managed your affairs, my dear sir,—no doubt he has communicated the result to you. Yet no, when I come to think of it, he could scarcely have done so, as I met him only going home for that purpose on my way to your house. Suppose we call on him now, you can then hear the good news from himself.”

Jane looked for an explanation—but looked with a bright and happy expression.

Mr Pemberton replied to her look—“I think I remember exactly, but in case of any mistake, which I should not easily forgive myself for making in such a matter, do not you agree with me in thinking that we had better go to headquarters without further loss of time?”

They accordingly set off at a brisk trot, taking the direction of Mr Hopkins' house, in the hopes of speedily ascertaining from him the exact position of Mr Holmes' affairs. Passing quickly through the extensive grounds, they arrived at the house, at the door of which they were met by Matilda, who, having seen them coming, had gone down in haste to carry Jane off to the drawing-room; leaving the gentlemen to be ushered into the library where Mr Hopkins was seated. On their entrance he rose and shook hands most warmly with Mr Holmes, saying—“I have just this moment sent a letter to post containing good news for you, my dear sir; and I do most heartily congratulate you. Things have turned out

better than I could have anticipated, and at this moment you have a balance of £5000 at our bank; and there may be a thousand or two to add to this later on."

For a moment Mr Holmes felt almost faint, the news, being far beyond his most sanguine expectations, almost overcame him. He had thought it likely that about £2000 might be secured for him, but £5000 was indeed far beyond what he had any right to expect. When he had sufficiently recovered himself to be able to speak, he tendered his most grateful thanks to Mr Hopkins for his kindness.

"Do not mention it, pray, my dear sir, I have only done as I would be done by, it is a pure matter of business; though I must add, that it has afforded me the greatest satisfaction to have the business turn out so pleasantly, and to be able to return, in some slight degree, your daughter's kindness to my dear Matilda. She is a different girl since she has been under her instruction. Miss Holmes has been so wonderfully enabled to influence Matilda for

good, that she is no longer the selfish puss she used to be; she was always a spoilt child, being as you know our only one; still our love for her did not make us blind to her faults, selfishness being the most prominent of them. Now I do assure you all this is changed, her love for us is greater, and her tender thoughtfulness for her mother is truly refreshing to see. My wife is, I am sorry to say, a great invalid at times, and suffers much. Matilda's disregard of her comfort and the absence of many little acts of kindness which so greatly tend to soothe an invalid, had often caused me pain, not to say anxiety. I feared such an utterly selfish child would grow into an unamiable woman; I feel that I owe your daughter a debt that I shall never be able to repay."

As Mr Hopkins was not by any means a demonstrative man, Mr Holmes was surprised at the energy with which he had spoken, saying, as he rose to take his leave, "that he felt deeply gratified at the praise bestowed on his daughter, and was thankful that the

school-keeping period of her life had been productive of so much good."

Entering the drawing-room to look for Jane, and make their apologies for having so long detained her, Mr Pemberton advanced towards Matilda with a smile, saying, "I have been hearing all sorts of things about you, Miss Matilda, and about your friend Miss Holmes also."

"Then I am sure you did not hear much that was good about me," she said, laughing, "but as to dear Miss Holmes, that is another matter altogether, Mr Pemberton. I defy any one to say anything bad of her. She is a perfect darling, you don't know her, so kind and good and clever: and better still she tries and wants to make us all as good as she is herself, and I am sure we were all tiresome and naughty enough, when she took us in hand. So whatever good there may be in any of us now, we have to thank her for it. So don't say a word against her, Mr Pemberton, I warn you; Miss Holmes is my best friend, and I love her dearly; we all love her, and I really don't think you

can know anything about her at all—but papa and mamma do.”

Mr Pemberton was exceedingly amused at Matilda's outburst, and as much pleased as amused ; so shaking hands heartily with her he said,

“I quite agree with you, dear young lady, and I think Miss Holmes must not be spoken evil of in my presence any more than in that of her staunch little admirer.”

During the homeward ride Jane had the altered state of her father's circumstances fully explained to her. Mr Pemberton then asked if he might be allowed to know what witchcraft she used with her pupils to gain such influence over them, as he had just been hearing about, and in fact to be able to change them so completely.

“Love has had a great deal to do with it,” Jane replied. “I am a strong believer in the power of love, but as to having changed any of my dear pupils' hearts, that is indeed another thing. That which has changed Matilda or any of the others, is that which alone can

change us all—the transforming power of the Holy Ghost. She is now, I humbly trust, one of God's own children ; endeavouring by her daily life and actions to show that she is so. She was naturally a remarkably selfish child, spoilt by over-indulgent parents. All her affection seemed centred in self. Of all my pupils she was, I must confess, the one I had the least hope of, yet you see what God has done, and how He has been pleased to bless my poor efforts."

Mr Pemberton now urged that a time should be fixed for Jane's promised visit to his country-seat, accompanied by Mr and Mrs Holmes, who were to assist in superintending the proper hanging of the beautiful painting. This was accordingly done, and it was agreed by common consent that it should take place at no very distant time.

CHAPTER XXV.

TENTH LESSON ON CONFIRMATION.

WHEN Jane next met her pupils, she asked them all to give her their careful undivided attention, as family matters had rendered it necessary that the holidays should commence sooner than she had at first proposed. "But," she continued, "we have arrived at the last lesson that it will be necessary to give. Mr De Burgh will supply, I am sure, what I may have omitted, and will go more deeply and more closely into the whole subject; and I do hope, my dear girls, that you will yield him your fullest attention. To-day we have come to ask what additional duty is imposed after Confirmation, viz., The receiving the Lord's Supper. Confirmation is intended to be a preparation for this. We will to-day try to ascertain the

nature of the Lord's Supper, and its benefits to those who receive it worthily. It was, as you know, instituted by Christ Himself immediately after the Jewish passover, and was evidently intended by Him to supersede it, just as Christian baptism superseded the circumcision of the Jew. On the night of that last passover which He and His disciples celebrated together, when they were reminded of God's care of His people in Egypt, and of how the blood-sprinkled houses were protected by Christ Himself, who interposed between the destroying angel and those houses marked by the lamb's blood, and would not suffer the angel to enter them, Christ took bread—one of the ordinary passover loaves lying before Him—and brake it and said, 'Take and eat this, for this is my body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of me.' The lamb was no longer to represent His mercy in Egypt, a new symbol was required for a far greater mercy. He was going to die. On that night He was to be betrayed and condemned. On the next morning He was to hang on the cross in death

for the sins of the whole world, so that any one having confidence in his death, or the breaking of that body, should have eternal life. He was then establishing a sacramental feast to remind His Church, until His coming again, of the sacrifice He was now about to offer. Look well at the action. He took bread—why bread? It is the staff of life. Of Himself He says—‘I am the living bread which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever. The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life.’ It is therefore evident why Christ chose bread as the symbol of His body, the symbol of His death, the symbol of the life which that death secures. He says, ‘This is my body.’ The Jews of old had said to Him, ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’ His answer was, ‘Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.’ This is strong language—not too strong. The disciples wondered and were offended, and

asked what He could possibly mean by such an assertion. He says very remarkably, 'What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?' He will then be altogether out of the reach of carnal eating, yet I maintain what I said before, 'except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.' Why can you not understand what ought to be perfectly simple to you? 'It is the Spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' The meaning of Christ's sacramental language is therefore plain enough. Eat this bread, it represents my body. Eat it in faith, and by the Spirit which quickeneth; and by my words of power you shall eat my flesh by faith in your heart, after a spiritual and heavenly manner; in other words, you shall be one with me and with one another. Do this in remembrance of me and of the sacrifice I am now about to offer for you, and for the world. After this Christ took one of the cups of wine which also stood on the Jewish passover table; it was always there. He had not far to seek for

an emblem of His blood which was to be poured out. He gave this to His disciples, after blessing it, and said, Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me. The disciples quite understood His meaning. It was not blood they knew, because no Jew was allowed to touch it. It was not Christ's blood, for He stood a living man before them. His blood was not yet shed. It was only to be shed. When therefore He said, Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood, they knew well He was using the ordinary passover language—'This wine represents my blood, which is, in intention, already shed for you.' But what did Christ mean by calling it His blood? Surely this, that if by faith in their hearts, in obedience to His command, they received that outward symbol or sign of His death and of His blood shed for them; by His quickening Spirit, and His words of power, He would mingle spiritually His life with their life; and their life with each other, so that in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace, the life of His Church and people

should be hid with Him. In other words, it is one of the ways by which He allows the exercise of faith to graft the branches of the Church into the true vine. Without His life we cannot live—without union with our Redeemer we die—without spiritual drinking of the blood of Christ we have no life in us. He meant to give His Church this sacramental help not only to remember His great love, and His great sacrifice, but to be to it in all ages a means of grace. I trust what I have said is plain. In order, however, that you may not misunderstand the matter in any way, I will give you the different views held by portions of the Church on this sacrament. The Roman Catholic believes what is, to my mind, repulsive. He believes that when the mass is celebrated he offers up Christ, and that any one who receives the consecrated wafer eats the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ, that when the priest says, ‘This is my body,’ the bread disappears, and there comes instead the Christ who may and ought to be worshipped. There is no trace whatever of any such doctrine in the Bible. It is altogether a mistake from

beginning to end. There was only one sacrifice for sin, and it was sufficient for the sins of the world. It can never be repeated. Christ ever liveth in the highest heaven to make intercession for us, and cannot be dragged down by ten thousand priests on ten thousand altars, to be sacrificed when they please, and if He could it would be useless, for our Lord says His flesh profiteth nothing. Away, then, with the carnal doctrine which has deceived so many. The Lutheran doctrine is not quite so repulsive, but it has the same error. That Church believes that the bread remains bread, and the wine remains wine, but that with that bread and with that wine there is present not the spiritual, but the real presence of Christ. This is called, not transubstantiation, or the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, but consubstantiation, or a receiving with the bread and wine the real body of Christ and His real blood. If the one doctrine is untrue the other is also untrue, and certainly it is not held by the Church of England, or in any way supported by the teaching of God's Word.

There is still another doctrine held by many who do not belong to the Church of England, and who have been naturally revolted by the gross and carnal teaching of Romanist and Lutheran. The Lord's Supper by them is looked upon as a simple love-feast—a feast at which we remember Christ's love, and our mutual duty one towards another. This view destroys the nature of a sacrament, which the Church of England, and indeed almost all branches of the Christian Church, hold the Lord's Supper to be. A sacrament, I need hardly tell you, is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself as a means by which we receive the same (grace), and a pledge to assure us thereby (that we have received it). The outward and visible sign of the Lord's Supper is said truly to be 'bread and wine which the Lord hath commanded to be received'; the inward part of the sacrament—the grace which we are also to receive—is defined to be 'the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received

by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.' We must therefore discard this last notion as well as the two former. It is true so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The faithful in the Lord's Supper are of course those who *by faith* spiritually eat in their hearts the spiritual body and spiritual blood of Christ. Those who have not faith eat and drink their own condemnation, not discerning the Lord's body. The twenty-eighth article of our Church is very plain, and you ought to learn it by heart. It will be a great help to you. It says, 'The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death, insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we eat is a partaking of the body of Christ. And likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture,

overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner, and the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.' I do hope, dear girls, that you now fully understand the nature of the Lord's Supper. The benefits of receiving it have already been spoken of to some extent, because it is impossible to explain the nature of the sacrament, without seeing the spiritual advantages which must flow out to those who worthily partake of it. There is, you see, the twofold union established here, first directly with Christ as the Head of the Church, and then with one another as the members of His body. We all eat of one loaf—we all drink of one cup—and indeed if we are in Christ, and by His quickening Spirit have become new creatures, we must love each other, for love is of God. In coming to one table—eating of one loaf—drinking of one cup—and taking into our heart one Christ—we become joined to one another

by a union which cannot be broken except by sin. The Lord's Supper establishes in us a bond of union, such as we may seek for in vain elsewhere. Look then, for one moment longer, at some of the advantages which those receive who come to the holy table with a true penitent heart and lively faith—in love with one another. They join themselves to Christ, whilst He joins Himself to them. They live in Christ and He lives in them. They become one with Christ, and He becomes one with them. The Holy Spirit, the indwelling Spirit of grace, effects this union by His power, and the Father comes and takes up His abode where the Son and the Spirit dwell, so that we receive here, time after time, all the help and support which the Trinity in unity, and the unity in Trinity, can give us—joy and rejoicing, peace and hope spring up within us, and God seems pledged to us for all that we require in time and eternity. And not only so, but the great body of the Church of the redeemed here meet to strengthen and support one another. All that great militant body fighting against God's

enemies, fighting and contending earnestly for God's truth, here they ought to meet, and here they ought to pledge themselves to love and mutual support, and sympathy and help. This was intended. One by one we go to the font, and are admitted to Christ's body, the Church, but not so in the Lord's Supper. There the whole army meet, and swear allegiance to God in Christ and allegiance to one another. If, dear girls, you mean to lead a godly and a holy life of faith and prayer and usefulness, if you mean to lead a life hid with Christ, and springing out from Christ, if you mean to lead a life of Christian fellowship, and holy peace and calm, if you mean to have rest in the constant fighting without, and the constant struggle of sin within you, refuse not to come to the holy table, that there you may realise more fully all God's precious promises, and all those mutual duties which bind man to man, but especially Christian to Christian. This will be your new obligation. Nay, let me say, it will be one of your highest privileges, after you have embraced Christ and

become His servants and friends. And now, girls, one kiss of love ere we part. May God's grace and God's love be with you now and ever."

The scene which followed we may well imagine. Suffice it to say, the evidence then was given of deep feeling and deep gratitude. Not one of those girls was absent from the first communion held after Confirmation, nor from many, many subsequent communions. They proved the words and found them true—Christ's words, and Christ's promises.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONCLUSION.

WE must now hasten to a close. It is time to wish our kind readers farewell; but ere doing so, we must carry ourselves in fancy to the grounds of Mr Pemberton, which, though not very extensive, are tastefully arranged. The party are approaching the house: they enter the drawing-room, and a luxurious room it is;—there stands the workman—there also rests the painting.

“You must forgive me; I fear I am somewhat unreasonable, but I cannot rest, dearest, till that painting is safe in its place, and this you have promised to decide upon.”

Jane slightly started. Dearest was a new word to her ears from Mr Pemberton, but she

had that day given him the right to use it. Yes, she had promised to be his, and that very soon. A few moments sufficed to hang the painting in its resting-place, and they both gazed at it with satisfaction—Mr Pemberton for many and obvious reasons; Jane thinking how much it had been improved by that dash of white, moulded by kind Mr De Burgh's hands into the broken mirror, and of how her sorrows had passed away with the finishing of the picture. And now they are straying through the grounds soon to become her own. There is the parterre brilliant with flowers, all arranged as she had hastily sketched it. They enter the gardens. There is the glass house built according to her design, it looks well, and satisfies her, more because it pleases him, than because she thinks her own taste good. Suggestions and hints are treasured up to be carried out during the next few weeks, and they again enter the house; and the dream is so far true, that sundry changes have taken place in the drawing-room furniture. Amongst other things, a richly tuned grand piano is there—over which Jane ran her fingers

lightly at first, but afterwards closed with one of the grand marches of the day. He looked on and listened well pleased.

“This is a delightful instrument, indeed, dear love,” she said; “I begin to fear I shall be too happy. Do you think it is good for any one to have so much happiness?”

Mr Pemberton took both her hands in his, and looking fondly at her, said—“God had taken your all. Life itself at one time had well-nigh gone too, yet, through all, you were happy and contented; if God now chooses to show His love, cannot you bear the smile as you have stood the frown?”

“But there never was a frown. There was unmixed love in the cup of sorrow that I drank.”

“You gave in your poverty much to God, cannot you now give of your wealth?”

“Oh, but may I?”

“May you! you do not know me, dearest; my highest desire is to consecrate all I have, and all He gives, to His service?”

“Yes, I thought so, but it is very pleasant to

hear it from your own lips, you make me so happy.”

The piano was again to aid in giving utterance to her feelings, and she sang out sweetly and thrillingly in the words of Creudson—

“ I’ve found a joy in sorrow,
A secret balm for pain,
A beautiful to-morrow
Of sunshine after rain.
I’ve found a hand of healing
Near every bitter spring,
A whispered promise stealing
O’er every broken string.

“ I’ve found a glad hosanna,
For every woe and wail,
A handful of sweet manna,
When grapes of Eshcol fail.
I’ve found the Rock of Ages,
When desert wells were dry,
And after weary stages,
I’ve found an Elim nigh.

“ An Elim with its coolness,
Its fountains and its shade,
A blessing in its fulness,
When words of promise fade.
O’er tears of soft contrition,
I’ve seen a rainbow light,
A glory of fruition,
So near, so out of sight.

“ My Saviour, Thee possessing,
I have the joy, the balm,

The healing and the blessing,
 The sunshine and the psalm,
 The promise for the fearful,
 The Elim for the faint,
 The rainbow for the tearful,
 The glory for the saint."

When she had concluded, Mr Pemberton placed another song before her, asking her to play it for him. "He would," he said, "only take the liberty of changing the name—the words being Cowper's—

"Janie, I want a lyre with other strings,
 Such aid from Heaven as some have feigned they drew,
 An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
 And undebased by praise of meaner things,
 That ere thro' age I shed my wings,
 I may record thy worth with honour due,
 In verse as musical as thou art true,
 And that immortalises whom it sings.

"But thou hast little need ; there is a book
 By seraph writ with beams of heavenly light,
 On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
 A chronicle of actions just and bright,
 There all thy deeds, my faithful Janie, shine,
 And since thou ownest that praise—I spare thee mine."

When he had concluded, Jane rose from the piano blushing deeply, and reminded him of Doddridge's dream of the palace, with all his good deeds recorded on the walls, and seemingly

built up as the deeds were done. "How happy it is for us," she said, "to feel that God kindly blots out all our sins, but remembers all we do for Him, even to the giving a cup of cold water to a wanting disciple."

On Jane's return to Chester, it was arranged that she should have a complete change of scene for three weeks, and thus escape from the preparation for her wedding, and the constant coming and going of those employed on her simple trousseau. Mr Holmes took his daughter to North Wales, from place to place; together they climbed the hill-sides, together walked along the shores; together they talked over the wonderful past, and together looked into the coming future. It was a time of great enjoyment, and helped to brace up Jane the better for her new life. One day she found herself the guest of a friend of Mr Pemberton, who owned one of those grand old castles overlooking the sea. Straying out in the early morning, a considerable distance from the castle, without hat or bonnet, and only accompanied by Mr Pemberton's dog Bobby, who, with the

peculiar instinct of his race, had already claimed her as his mistress, she sat on one of the rocks commanding a full view of the sea, and then held converse with herself. "How strange has been the road by which my heavenly Father has brought me! Suppose my dear father had continued to accumulate wealth, and that I had been the rich heiress of his large property, what might have been my present position? Might I not have been utterly spoiled by flattery? Or might I not have been the wife of some one who had married me only for my money, but who had pretended to love me? Ah, me! what a life! What would have been the future of my dear parents? Would my darling mother have been so happy? Would my father have been so beloved and so respected? Would either have loved God so much? Or suppose I had been crushed under the first blow of failure and loss and work, and had died. I trust I should have been safe, but what should I have done to show my love for my Lord? And what would have been the present state of my dear parents?—broken-hearted, dispirited, unreconciled to each

other, and doubting God's love. They might, indeed, have had to pass through a wilder sea of trouble ere God had shown them their true interest. Truly God is good and loving and tender-hearted. When one looks at the sun glancing on those moving waters, does not He seem to smile? When one even regards this simple rose, does it not seem to tell of the tenderness of His care? When man dominates over His work, as he seems to do on this lovely scene of grandeur, is not one inclined to say, 'What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the Son of man that thou so regardest him? Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hand.' Does it not give one some confidence in the future that He who has led will still lead—that He who has so largely blessed will still bless? Most of all, it is a comfort to my own trembling spirit that He who has so kindly made me a little useful to my darling parents will also make me a source of joy and some little help to my own generous, noble-minded husband of the future. Oh! may I be useful to him personally, and useful in the carry-

ing out of his generous plans for the good of others."

A month passed rapidly, during which Mrs Holmes was in her glory. Then Jane entered a church, but not the one of which she had dreamed. She had no fear of the churchyard. She did not draw back from the rails—she did not faint—nor had she any difficulty in seeing the face of her loved husband when he assisted her into his carriage, and drew down the blind, and folded her in his strong arms. She drove away happily, feeling a real rest in the care and love of him who had given his heart and all that he had to God and to her.

We spare our reader the parting scene between mother and daughter. It was, after all, but a momentary pang.

Mr and Mrs Holmes soon afterwards settled in a house not far from the house of their loved child, Mr Holmes having secured more profitable employment in Liverpool, as confidential clerk in one of the large establishments there. Their chief delight, in succeeding years, was to assist her in some of her schemes

of benevolence, in the forming of which she seemed instinctively to know the parts most suitable, not only to her parents, but to each of those numerous Christian friends who formed rather a large circle around her. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates."

THE END.

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